MORNING SICKNESS BRINGS REWARDS, PG 4

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West IS best for Tories, report says

FUNDING A new report says the Harper government used the guise of "economic diversification" to pour hundreds of millions of tax dollars into a booming western economy.

An exhaustive Access to Information search by the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation found the Tories have funded everything from flagpoles to school murals.

It's all been handled under the Western Economic Diversification fund, which has paid out more than $440 million across the four western provinces since the Conservatives came to power in January 2006.

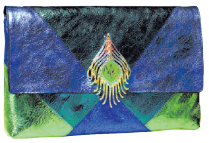
Before becoming prime minister, Stephen Harper railed against regional subsidies.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Comment pg 12

Passion for music can speak loudly

Style pg 29



Brit designer comes to H&M

ShareYourViews
torontoletters@metronews.ca

Canadian cheer

DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canada is sending its first team to the World Cup of Cheerleading, which takes place today and tomorrow at Disney World. Both the Canadian national all-girl team and co-ed team practised in Pickering yesterday before heading to the competition in Florida. Story, page 4.

Drivers cut off

New cellphone ban passed

Get your hands off those cellphones, drivers — a new law that bans using hand-held devices to talk, email, or send text messages while behind the wheel was passed yesterday.

The new rules, which won't come into effect until at least the fall, include a fine of up to $500 as the province joins other jurisdictions in cracking down on drivers using the devices.

"What we're trying to do is to avoid distractions while people are driving — those distractions being caused, in this case, by electronic devices that are hand-held," said Transportation Minister Jim Bradley, adding he has no plans to ban eating or drinking coffee in cars.

Exempt

- The law exempts firefighters, police and paramedics, but several other groups have also asked for a pass.

The law doesn't affect the use of hands-free devices such as Bluetooths or using cellphones for 9-1-1 calls, but it does ban portable video games, MP3 players and DVD players.

Global positioning systems will be allowed, as long as they're properly secured to the dashboard.

There are no demerit points attached to the bill, but drivers who place others at risk by using one of the banned devices can also be charged under existing careless driving laws.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pilot shuns hero label

Capt. James Murphy, the pilot of the CanJet airliner hijacked Sunday by a deranged Jamaican gunman, has made his first public comments about the ordeal, saying he and his crew don't feel like heroes and they need time to recover in private.

Murphy, who is based in the Halifax area, issued a brief statement yesterday that said the crew of Flight 918 did what they were trained to do.

Still, the captain made it clear the harrowing incident on the tarmac in Montego Bay has taken an emotional toll on many of those aboard the aircraft.

"We've been called heroes," Murphy said. "We certainly don't feel like heroes. We did what we had to do and what we were trained to do. The passengers for whom we were responsible coped so well and that should never be forgotten."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Pedestrian strikes windshield
A pedestrian who was crossing against a red light was thrown onto the windshield of a car early yesterday morning at the intersection of Finch and Kipling avenues. The 58-year-old man was taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Local

Bail decision reserved

A decision on whether to grant bail to a Toronto man charged with allegedly trying to send nuclear technology to Iran has been reserved until today. Mahmoud Yadegari was arrested last Thursday after a joint eight-week investigation by the RCMP and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Authorities allege Yadegari tried to procure and export pressure transducers, which can be used in the production of enriched uranium. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Tomorrow's Metro

Music
Check out Alan Cross' Sound Check for the latest in music.

metronews.ca

What's online today.

Video Jim Flaherty sees positive economic signs, but warns unemployment will remain high at **metronews.ca/canada**

Video Tori Stafford's family harbour "suspicions" about composite sketch of suspect at **metronews.ca/canada**

Blog Hollywood Rants blasts Billy Bob Thornton's unapologetic appearance on Jimmy Kimmel.

Lotteries

Lotto 6/49: 4, 5, 21, 33, 42 & 47. Bonus 24.
Ontario 49: 1, 2, 5, 7, 38 and 47. Bonus 39.
Ontario Pick 3: 9 7 4; **Ontario Pick 4:** 5 3 5 1
Encore: 2035050
Daily Keno: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 20, 35, 37, 38, 45, 47, 53, 56, 62, 63, 64 and 69.
These results are not official.

Premier defends lottery corp.

More than 90 misprinted tickets no cause to 'hang' OLG: McGuinty

Premier Dalton McGuinty dismissed calls yesterday to overhaul Ontario's problem-plagued lottery corporation, saying he won't "hang" the agency over a few misprinted tickets.

The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. is recalling 92 lottery tickets sold Monday that were printed with the wrong draw date — the latest in a string of missteps that critics say have undermined public confidence in the gaming agency.

McGuinty acknowledged the OLG's record is far from perfect, but said it took the right steps to remedy the latest mistake.

"There's always some political fun to be had in dealing with the OLG, given their record, which is less than stellar," McGuinty said in the legislature.

"But are we going to hang them for 92 misprints on a day when they sold 563,639 tickets? I think not."

The misprints are yet another foul-up by a $6-billion-a-year agency that's already been sharply criticized for insider wins, botched scratch-and-win tickets and even buying foreign cars instead of Ontario-made vehicles as casino prizes, said NDP critic Peter Kormos.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Where faulty tickets were sold

- The OLG says the 92 misprinted tickets are among more than 560,000 tickets sold between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Monday. The tickets were sold at 41 locations across the province, including Belleville, Hamilton, Kenora, Kitchener, London, New Liskeard, Niagara Falls, North Bay, Oshawa, Sudbury and the Greater Toronto Area.

Lack of math skills costs us, expert warns

EDUCATION For math academic and proselytizer Dr. Arvind Gupta, the financial meltdown is only the thin edge of the wedge.

"That's a game," Gupta said yesterday of stock markets, while sitting a short walk from Bay Street. "The financial system is there to sell you instruments that make them money. And people don't understand what they're buying."

For Gupta, the dearth of everyday math skills in this country is a deeper and more systemic problem.

"If we had more mathematical sophistication, we could reason better about the world around us, whether it's understanding which cellphone plan to pick or how to build better cars."

Gupta, 47, teaches computational genomics at B.C.'s Simon Fraser University.

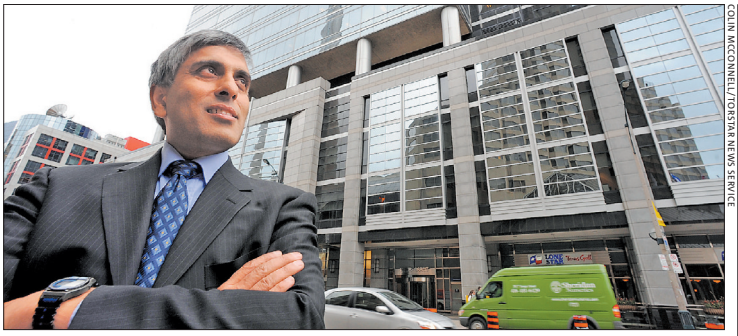
"The truth is, I meet a lot of mathematicians who don't understand their own finances," said Gupta. "Very few of us understand what happened in this economic crisis.

He quotes studies showing that kids start out loving math — 85 per cent of them say so in Grade 3. By Grade 8, that number has nosedived to 25 per cent.

Gupta believes that has a lot to do with the weak math skills of average adult Canadians.

"You've got this whole population who are at this middling level. What do you think happens to kids when they hit (Grade 8)? Their parents are starting to struggle at that level. The teachers aren't really well versed beyond that level. And so the kids fall off," Gupta said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Dr. Arvind Gupta says a lack of math skills is hurting Canada.

Father of sick baby appears in court

CHARGES The father of a baby who was at the centre of an organ transplant drama in Toronto appeared in court yesterday to face charges of aggravated assault and robbery.

Jason Wallace

Jason Wallace, 34, of Bradford, is charged with two other men over an incident stemming from an altercation at a Toronto bar in October 2006.

Wallace and the others learned in court they will go to trial Nov. 10.

Outside court, Wallace suggested he was not involved in the incident.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Dunlap observatory to offer new activities in the summer

The David Dunlap Observatory will return to active service after a lengthy deliberation about its future by the current owners. It will offer a new range of space and science activities beginning early this summer. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Suffering for good cause

Morning sickness may lead to higher baby IQ's: Study

For expectant mothers who suffer from morning sickness, there may be rewards beyond the bundles of wiggling joy to make up for gut-churning gestations.

A new study out of Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children found babies whose mothers experienced morning sickness later tested a few IQ points higher than the children of kids whose mothers had nauseous-free pregnancies.

"In a very popular way it kind of says that this suffering is for a good cause," said Dr. Gideon Koren, a top Sick Kids pediatrician and the senior study author. "So it's very reassuring to know that your severe experience right now is likely to have a good outcome."

Indeed, Koren says, the worse the morning sickness in the mothers, the more pronounced the child's intelligence boost became.

"More severe morning sickness as we measure the symptoms predicted better brain development," said Koren, who heads the hospital's popular Motherisk program.

The Sick Kids study, which was published in the Journal of Pediatrics, looked at 121 women who were divided about equally into three groups.

Canadian Institutes of Health Research scientist Anick Berard had some halting praise for the study, but took issue with its small sample size and key IQ conclusion.

"I think, first of all, it's a beautiful study, I will not say otherwise," said Berard, a University of Montreal pharmacology and pregnancy expert.

"I think (however) it has limitations and I think the conclusions are stretching it a little bit to my taste," she said.

Study children, who came from both Canada and the U.S., were brought to Sick Kids for IQ testing.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CAW wants to wrap up Chrysler talks

The head of the Canadian Auto Workers union said he hoped to reach a new labour agreement with Chrysler yesterday.

Ken Lewenza said both Chrysler and the government have told the CAW that a deal needs to be reached this week, and there was "a great desire" to wrap up negotiations yesterday.

He said CAW members would still have to ratify the deal and Chrysler had to complete its restructuring plan before the end of the month, and there's not much time left.

Lewenza said the bargaining is the toughest he's ever experienced.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

On April 30th, three of Toronto's top radio stations will be handing their mics over to a bunch of kids.

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DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Stacey Mitchell, Daniel Lewis' girlfriend, and his mother, Lisa Mitchell, leave 12 Division yesterday. Lewis is Toronto's 14th homicide of the year after he was shot in an alley Tuesday.

Victim loved hoops and family: Mother

To someone reading the paper yesterday, Daniel Lewis was just another teenager with a criminal record gunned down in the alleyway of a bad neighbourhood.

But to his mother, Lisa Mitchell, Lewis was just a boy, albeit a 19-year-old one, who liked to tell jokes, who adored his family, and was still struggling to find himself.

"He was very loving. Loved basketball, loved his friends, he was talking about going back to school," said the exhausted 40-year-old yesterday afternoon outside the 12 Division police building.

"You see what's going on around you as a parent. You hope that it doesn't come to your house," she said.

"I don't think that anyone anticipates it's going to happen to your child. You just don't. It doesn't matter what kind of life, whatever your child might be doing, it isn't something you expect."

Lewis was shot several times Tuesday in an alleyway off Dunraven Drive, near Keele Street and Rogers Road.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In custody

- Yesterday morning, two young men — an 18-year-old and one 17 — had been taken into custody. One was apprehended near the scene next to a dumpster. A gun was also recovered.

Cheerleaders head to Florida

The first world cheerleading championships start this morning in Florida, and Team Canada has every intention of bringing it like it's never been brought before.

The competition represents the latest step forward for a sport maligned by mean-girl stereotypes that participants say could not be further from the truth.

"Cheerleading is more than a couple of skinny girls wearing skirts and shaking pompoms," said 24-year-old national team member Jon Cameron.

Canada is sending two "Elite Level 5" teams of 30 members each to the championships, one all-girl and the other co-ed. The event runs until tomorrow at Disney World in Orlando. It won't be the first time most team members have competed State-side — almost all have travelled to the U.S. with club teams — but it will be their first time wearing the Maple Leaf.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

PENSIONS Ontario has no plans to bail out General Motors pensioners by topping up the province's inadequate safety net and will instead seek a broader solution to help all retirees caught in the pension crisis, Premier Dalton McGuinty said yesterday.

POOLS With young swimmers and parents waving signs outside, the Toronto District School Board approved a staff plan last night to keep its 13 most-profitable pools open and give 26 pools two more months to find a financial lifeboat. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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NDP push forestry aid

The NDP is urging the federal government to bring in a national policy to support the troubled forestry industry. John Rafferty, MP for Thunder Bay-Rainy River and the party's forestry critic, says a national strategy, including loan guarantees for troubled companies, will help protect thousands of jobs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Soldiers, vets to get free ride

Via Rail will offer free basic rail travel for military personnel and veterans again this summer. The company says the free tickets will be offered in July to all serving and former members of the Forces, with other discounts available for their dependents. A soldier or vet travelling free will be able to bring up to five family members along at half price. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Survey suggests Tory support sliding

POLITICS The Conservatives are losing ground to the Liberals and New Democrats in areas that will hold the key to electoral victory, a new poll suggests. The survey indicates the Liberals maintained a three-point lead over the Tories nationally.

But the Tories yielded ground in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia — the provinces most likely to determine the next election's outcome. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

NO CHARGES A Calgary police officer who shot and killed a man who refused to put down a knife won't face charges.

BUYOUTS Manitoba Premier Gary Doer says some homeowners will be offered buyouts for their flood-ravaged properties. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Police release sketch

Family of missing girl has suspicions about woman depicted

The family of Victoria Stafford says they have suspicions about the identity of a woman portrayed in a composite sketch released by police.

Victoria, known as Tori, has been missing since April 8 and was seen on surveillance video with a woman in a white puffy coat.

Victoria Stafford

Police in Woodstock, Ont., released a sketch of the woman late Tuesday, and the family of Tori's father says they have their own beliefs about who it may be.

Tori's aunt, Rebecca Stafford, says the family has some thoughts which they have shared with police but added they weren't prepared to elaborate.

WOODSTOCK POLICE HANDOUT

Woodstock police released this drawing of the unidentified person seen in a surveillance video with Victoria Stafford.

Tori's parents are split up and her mother, Tara McDonald, says she doesn't recognize the woman in the sketch.

Police say a witness provided information to create the sketch of the suspect in the abduction of the girl.

Det.-Insp. William Renton said, however, he could not provide any information about the witness.

McDonald said she has been studying the sketch since Tuesday night, but it does not resemble anyone she or her friends know.

"I've been staring at it all night and I don't have a clue at all," she said outside her home. "I posted it on Facebook and I've asked my friends to use the hair mixer program and add long hair, short hair, coloured hair, change the colours, change the style, just to see if maybe that adds some recognition at all. THE CANADIAN PRESS

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ski jumpers Meaghan Reid, from left, Lindsey Van, Karla Keck and Jessica Jerome outside British Columbia Supreme Court in Vancouver, B.C., on Tuesday.

VANOC has its say in ski-jumping case

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

RIGHTS ISSUE Vancouver Olympic organizers are getting their turn to explain to a B.C. court why they can't — or won't — include women ski jumpers in the 2010 Games.

A group of 15 former and current jumpers is suing the Vancouver organizing committee, saying their rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are being violated by their exclusion from the Winter Games.

But the organizing committee, known as VANOC, says that while they receive government money and some government oversight, the Games are not a government activity so the charter doesn't apply. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Arctic fossils a new animal

Scientists say Arctic fossils belong to a new animal thought to be the missing link between today's seals, sea lions and walruses and their land-based ancestors. The discovery helps explain how a group of animals called pinnipeds came to live in the water. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Economy falling fast

The world economy will fall faster than at any time since the Second World War this year, with Canada's economy going along on the rough ride, the International Monetary Fund says.

In a significantly gloomier forecast than one released early this year, the IMF projects a 1.3 per cent drop in the global economy in 2009, with Canada's economy contracting by 2.5 per cent this year and the U.S. economy declining by 2.8 per cent.

"By any measure, this downturn represents by far the deepest global recession since the Great Depression," the IMF said in its latest World Economic Outlook, released yesterday. "All corners of the globe are being affected."

The new forecast of a decline in global economic activity for 2009 is much weaker than the 0.5 per cent growth the IMF had estimated in January.

The IMF says Canada will only experience a sluggish recovery in 2010 with growth of 1.2 per cent that won't even retrace the backward steps it took in the latter part of last year and this year. It also expects the U.S. economy will stay at 2009's depressed level. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Expected economic contraction

- China: 6.5 per cent
- Japan: 6.2 per cent
- Russia: 6 per cent
- Germany 5.6 per cent
- Britain: 4.1 per cent
- Mexico: 3.7 per cent
- United States: 2.8 per cent
- Canada: 2.5 per cent

OSAMU HONDA/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian diplomat Robert Fowler addresses the media at the United Nations in this file photo from earlier this month.

Diplomats freed

Two Canadian diplomats kidnapped in Africa have been freed after four months in captivity, the government of Mali confirmed yesterday.

A spokesman said Louis Guay and Robert Fowler, a high-level UN diplomat, have been freed in northern Mali.

The men were on a UN mission in Niger when they disappeared in December. Al-Qaida militants later claimed responsibility for their abduction.

A spokesman for Mali's president says kidnappers have released four foreign hostages, including the two Canadian UN staffers.

Seydou Cissouma said Fowler and Guay were freed yesterday, along with two women tourists kidnapped in a separate incident in January.

"We are aware of these media reports and have no comment at this time," said Catherine Loubier, a spokeswoman for Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon, when news reports of the release first surfaced yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Newfoundland officers arrest, detain autistic man

GARY HEBBARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dane Spurrell, 18, displays a wound he says was inflicted by handcuffs Newfoundland police officers put on him during a recent arrest.

POLICE A teenager was arrested and detained by Newfoundland police who mistook his autistic behaviour for public intoxication, "an obvious wrong" that underscores the need for better training for front-line officers, his mother said yesterday.

Dane Spurrell, 18, was walking home from a video game store just after midnight Sunday when he was approached by Royal Newfoundland Constabulary officers who told him he should be walking on a sidewalk and not on a road, his mother Diane says.

After saying that wasn't possible because there are no sidewalks in the area, Dane was asked by the two officers to allow them to smell his breath, but he resisted and was apprehended, she said.

She said she didn't know the whereabouts of her son until five hours after the incident, when she called 9-1-1 to report him missing.

Police did not allow him to phone her, but returned him home around 8 a.m. Sunday without charging him, she said.

"The biggest question I have is why he wasn't allowed to contact me. Everything could've been resolved with one phone call," his mother said.

She has filed a formal complaint against the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary. An independent police complaints commission is looking into the matter, and a criminal investigation into the conduct of the officers has also been launched. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Paternity uncertainty

A third woman now claims Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo fathered her child. The woman is a 39-year-old divorcee who runs a childcare centre, and while two other women are pursuing paternity claims, she says she has no plans to sue the president. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

U.S. energy goes green

U.S. President Barack Obama says his administration is creating the first U.S. program to authorize offshore projects to generate electricity from wind and ocean currents. In an Earth Day speech in the town of Newton, Iowa, Obama said his administration's move will open the door to major investments in clean energy generated offshore. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Philippines **Water ride**

AARON FAVILA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Women enjoy a ride on a cart to keep them dry from flood waters in Manila, Philippines, yesterday. Smoke-belching vehicles and trash-clogged drainage pipes that contribute to flooding remain a problem as the nation observed Earth Day.

News in brief

LONDON British police released the last of 12 suspects rounded up in a series of dramatic anti-terror raids earlier this month, failing to charge any of the men, authorities said yesterday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VOTE South Africans lined up before sunrise yesterday to vote in an election energized by the hugely popular Jacob Zuma, who has overcome scandals and helped generate an excitement. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Plan B access widened

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, reversing former policy, will now let 17-year-old girls get the 'morning-after' birth control pill without a doctor's prescription.

The FDA announced yesterday it will not appeal a federal judge's order that overturned a Bush administration policy.

Last month, U.S. District Judge Edward Korman ruled in a New York lawsuit that former U.S. president George W. Bush's appointees let politics, not science, drive their decision to allow over-the-counter access to these pills only for women 18 and older.

1,000,000
The number of American girls ages 15 to 19 who become pregnant each year; about 78 per cent of these pregnancies are unintended. PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Korman ordered the agency to let 17-year-olds get the medication, and separately to evaluate whether all age restrictions should be lifted.

Plan B is emergency contraception that contains a high dose of birth control drugs and will not interfere with an established pregnancy. Religious conservatives say it is the equivalent of an abortion pill because it can prevent a fertilized egg from attaching to the uterus.

If taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex, Plan B can reduce a woman's chances of pregnancy by as much as 89 per cent. It contains a high dose of birth control drugs and works by preventing ovulation, fertilization, or the implantation of a fertilized egg in the uterus. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No war crimes in Gaza: Israel

GAZA The Israeli military said yesterday its investigations concluded it did not violate international law during the Gaza war, bluntly deflecting war crimes allegations.

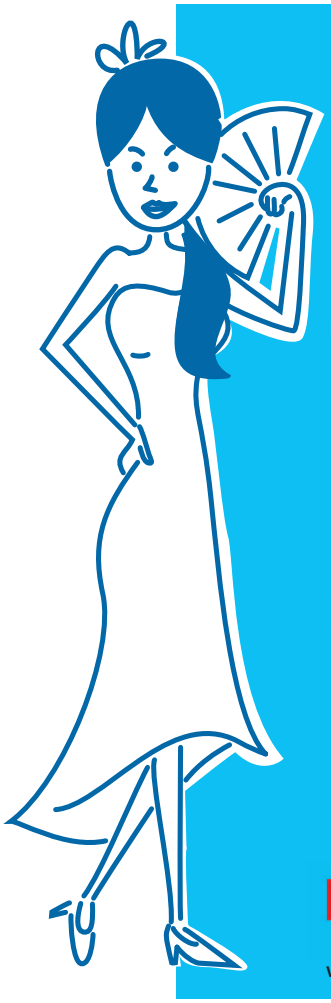
In Norway yesterday, a group of lawyers filed a complaint accusing former prime minister Ehud Olmert, Defence Minister Ehud Barak and eight other Israelis of war crimes. Norway's chief prosecutor Siri Frigaard told The Associated Press she will now determine whether there are grounds for charges or a police investigation.

Ehud Barak

Richard Goldstone, a former UN chief prosecutor for war crimes, has been appointed to head a UN investigation. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Two key Tamil Tigers surrender

CONFLICT Two senior Tamil Tiger officials surrendered to the Sri Lankan army yesterday, and refugees joined a stream of more than 80,000 people the government says have fled a war zone that appeared to shrink by the hour. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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transat HOLIDAYS

French minister announces pregnancy on Internet
The French, including their politicians, take Facebook seriously. Cabinet member Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet announced her pregnancy on the social networking site yesterday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Afghan stalemate

U.S. can't stop insurgents' ongoing attacks

U.S. troops have reached a stalemate against insurgents in Afghanistan's Taliban-dominated south and so far have been unable to stop attackers from returning, a senior U.S. commander said yesterday.

An estimated 80 per cent of Afghanistan's insurgent attacks now are happening in the country's southern region, Maj.-Gen. Michael Tucker said during a Pentagon briefing. He said insurgents have pushed south over the last year after military troops and police largely have thwarted their threats in eastern Afghanistan.

"We're at a stalemate," Tucker said in a 35-minute video conference call from Afghanistan.

"We just simply do not have enough forces to address the needs of the people down there to set the conditions for governance to take hold.

"It's a different enemy in the south than it is in the east. Obviously, the south is the centre of gravity for the Taliban themselves in Kandahar."

The United States is sending about 17,000 troops and an additional 4,000 training and counterinsurgency forces to Afghanistan over the next several months.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Band-e-Amir is seen in this undated photo in Bamiyan province of Afghanistan. The cascading collection of deep-blue high-mountain lakes became Afghanistan's first provisional national park yesterday as the violence-plagued nation took a big first step toward protecting one of its finest natural treasures.

Protocol followed at Jamaican airport: Company

PLANE The company responsible for security at the Jamaican airport where a would-be hijacker evaded detection and boarded a Canadian flight with a gun says its security team followed proper procedures.

MBJ Airports Ltd. said yesterday its preliminary report into the incident also found the response by the Canadian-trained Jamaican Constabulary Force was exceptional. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

CRIME Prosecutors say a New York City dad and another man robbed homes while his girlfriend drove the getaway minivan with the kids in tow. The three have pleaded not guilty to burglary and weapon charges. The Queens district attorney's office says a witness saw a minivan outside his home Monday with a woman in the driver's seat and the two men going out his front door. His sister's apartment was broken into. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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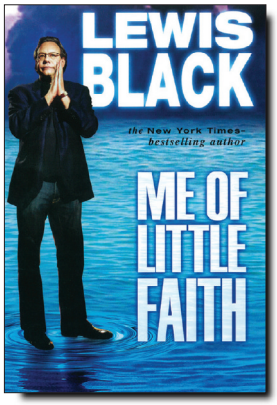

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Comment & Views

Comment

The man, the music, the identity

Relating

Andrea Woo

metronews.ca/woo

"Men profess to be lovers of music, but for the most part they give no evidence in their opinions and lives that they have heard it." — Henry David Thoreau.

As someone whose life is inextricably woven with music, I harbour a deep suspicion for anyone who doesn't listen to much of it.

This carries over into the dating arena, where it could be well-argued a man's attitude toward music can be telling of his attitude toward romantic relationships.

Music, after all, is a marker of cultural identity. It can permeate every facet of life — work, friends, hobbies, appearance — and shape the people they become.

It can make fast friends of strangers and close friends of casual acquaintances.

"It's very important," said a friend and fellow audiophile of sharing similar musical tastes with a significant other. "It implies compatibility and common interests — possibly even social views."

On the web

- For more views on relating, go to Love Bytes at metronews.ca/blogs

One girlfriend tells me she dated a man until she found out he likes Matchbox 20, at which point she felt "meh." Another who suspects her boyfriend is gay was all furrowed brows upon learning he loves Lady Gaga.

Individual artists aside, a person's passion for music can speak volumes about his or her character.

A man who has amassed shelves of classic vinyl records, for example, has invested time, money and effort into something he is passionate about. A Top 40 fan, not so much.

Hipster doofuses who make grand efforts to find the most obscure music possible — "It's these two Icelandic dudes with oboes and rainsticks!" — are probably as pretentious in other areas of life.

It can also be deduced a hip-hop head won't likely be procreating with the fragile emo kid any time soon.

That said, there is the occasional pairing of those who many would never expect to work, but do. They are the left-field collaborations, the seamless blends – the perfect mash-ups.

Andrea Woo is a Vancouver-based news and entertainment reporter. She won this column in a carnival dart game.

Views

Naiveté and international hypocrisy

Mona Eltahawy

Global View

If pirates were holding Nathalie Morin and her three children hostage would the Canadian government rescue her?

Morin, 24, is the Canadian woman who claims her Saudi husband Samir Said Ramthi Al-Bishi — whom she met in Canada — is holding her against her will in the kingdom, infamous for its appalling women's rights record. Morin's mother has threatened to sue the Canadian government for negligence if it doesn't do more to help her daughter.

Morin moved to Saudi Arabia in 2005, taking the Canadian-born child she had with Bishi with her. The couple has since had two more children, one of whom — according to Morin's mother — was conceived after rape.

Morin, who complained to her mother Bishi beats her and will not let her leave their apartment alone, visited Canada in 2006, but returned to Saudi Arabia saying she couldn't be without her children. Since then, Bishi has apparently refused to give her permission to travel, a requirement in the ultra-conservative kingdom.

"Where are the horrified headlines over women's rights in Saudi Arabia?"

Alleged marital rape? No leaving the house or travel without your husband's permission? Sound familiar?

Surely questions that should trouble Canada where horrified headlines recently chastised Afghan President Hamid Karzai for signing a law that allowed marital rape and barred women from leaving home without a husband's permission.

Where are the horrified headlines over women's rights in Saudi Arabia? Morin admitted it was a mistake to move to Saudi Arabia, so those who want her to lie in the bed she made of her own naivete can move on.

But it is precisely those shouting "she should've known better" who should answer my pirate question. Did they blame U.S. Capt. Richard Philips and his crew for sailing along a stretch of water where Somali pirates had taken dozens of hostages?

I don't believe invasions can liberate women. Laws that guarantee equality and protect women's rights are more important than guns and tanks.

Mona Eltahawy is an award-winning Egyptian-born commentator and public speaker on Arab and Muslim issues. She reported on the Middle East for 10 years before moving to the U.S.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

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Pan Orient Energy's annual profit swells

Pan Orient Energy Corp., active in Thailand, Indonesia and Canada, said it earned $31.8 million US for all of last year, up from $4.8 million in 2007. Pan Orient is the operator of the Na Sanun East field in Thailand and has a 60 per cent working interest in it. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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Canwest gets debt extension

LENDERS Canwest Global Communications Corp. has arranged another reprieve from its lenders and noteholders, this time until May 5.

Canwest, whose previous extensions expired Tuesday, said yesterday it is continuing discussions with the secured lenders and a committee of holders of its eight per cent senior notes.

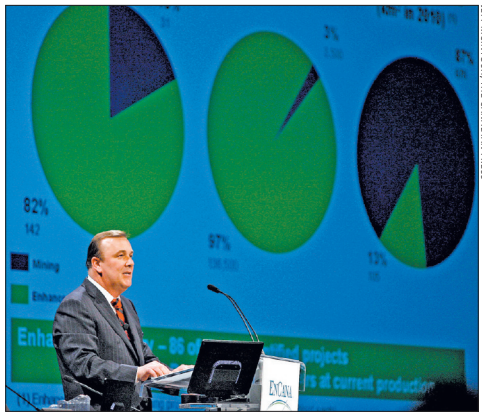
It said during that period the lenders will continue to provide credit to the owner of the Global TV network, speciality TV channels, a chain of newspapers and the National Post. THE CANADIAN PRESS

EnCana reports jump in profit

ENERGY EnCana Corp. could reduce an already modest capital spending program this year if weak natural gas prices persist much longer, despite a huge improvement in net earnings, its chief executive cautioned yesterday.

But Randy Eresman said the development of huge shale natural gas plays, like Haynesville in Louisiana and Montney in B.C., will be needed to meet North America's energy demand in the long-term.

The Calgary-based company booked a net profit of $962 million US or $1.28 per share during the first quarter. THE CANADIAN PRESS



JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

EnCana president and CEO Randy Eresman addresses shareholders yesterday at the company's annual meeting in Calgary.

Credit card rules coming, Flaherty says

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty told reporters yesterday the Canadian government is working on regulating credit card companies.

He noted that interest rates for credit cards remain high despite aggressive rate reductions by the Bank of Canada but did not say what he had in mind in terms of regulation.

"There are a number of issues we can address with respect to credit cards," Flaherty said.

In the January budget, the government said it would move to limit "business practices that are not beneficial to consumers," adding that one measure would be to require a minimum grace interest-free period on new purchases.

The minister's comments came as the heads of Visa Canada and MasterCard Canada, the country's dominant credit card companies, appeared before the Senate banking committee to argue against regulation.

They also asked for further powers to enter the debit-card market, which withdraws funds directly from a consumer's accounts — a business that is dominated by Canada's chartered banks.

MasterCard Canada president Kevin Stanton said that allowing the credit card companies to enter the debit market would increase competition and give consumers greater benefits, including use around the world. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Who sets rates

- Credit card companies set interchange rates, which indirectly determine how much merchants must pay for their bank to process credit card transactions.
- The more visible interest rates charged to card users are set by the banks and others who issue the cards.

GM may shut U.S. plants up to 9 weeks

AUTO General Motors is planning to temporarily close most of its U.S. factories for up to nine weeks this summer because of slumping sales and growing inventories of unsold vehicles, two people briefed on the plan said.

GM Canada declined to comment on any changes at its Canadian operations.

A few plants that make more popular models could remain open for part of the shutdown period, but at reduced assembly line speeds.

Thousands of workers could be laid off but would still get most of their pay because their United Auto Workers union contract requires GM to make up much of the difference between unemployment benefits and their wages.

GM is living on $13.4 billion US in government loans and faces a June 1 deadline to cut its debt, reduce labour costs and take other restructuring steps. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Freddie Mac's finance chief found dead at Virginia home

SUICIDE David Kellermann, the acting chief financial officer of money-losing mortgage giant Freddie Mac was found dead at his home yesterday morning in what police said was an apparent suicide.

Kellermann

Kellermann, 41, shared the $900,000 US suburban Virginia home with his wife and a daughter.

Kellermann worked for Freddie Mac for the past 16 years and was named acting chief financial officer last September when the government seized control of the company.

Freddie Mac and sibling company Fannie Mae have both come under fire as they plan to pay more than $210 million US in bonuses through next year to give workers the incentive to stay in their jobs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business in brief

RETAIL Youth sportswear retailer West 49 Inc. is getting grief from grouchy bankers after tumbling to an $8.5 million net loss in its latest quarter, including $9.6 million in after-tax writedowns of goodwill and other assets. Its credit facility has been reduced but the company said it will be able to fund operations and anticipated capital spending this year.

LOSS Sensor maker Opsens Inc. says a smaller gross margin and higher marketing costs contributed to a bigger loss during its second quarter. Its net loss for the period was $682,000 or two cents a share compared with a loss of $403,000 or a penny a share in the 2008 period. Quarterly revenue dipped five per cent to $606,000 from $637,000

MINING Tahera Diamond Corp. said yesterday it hopes to either restart commercial mining operations or sell its Jericho mine in Nunavut. The Toronto-based diamond miner said it has entered into a financial advisory agreement with Cormark Securities to raise $30 million to $40 million "to fund the re-commencement." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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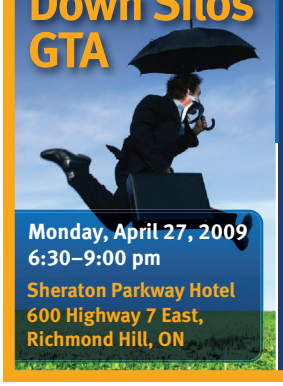
Knocking Down Silos GTA



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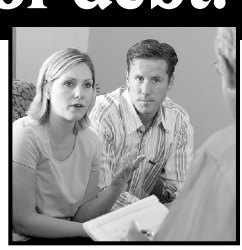

There are many reasons why Spergel assisted over 2000 people with their financial problems last year. Many were overloaded with credit card debt. Others are caught in the current economic downturn. If you are being chased by credit card companies and collection agencies, Spergel can stop them. At Spergel we can help you get out of debt and then stay out of debt.

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Smokeless tobacco business hits Altria's profit

Cigarette maker Altria Group said its first-quarter profit fell 76% due in part to buying a smokeless tobacco business. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Toromont profit up

Toromont Industries Ltd. booked a record 44 per cent increase in first-quarter profit compared to results from a year ago.

Revenue rose to $457.7 million despite lower booking activities in both compression and equipment groups. Net income for the quarter ended March 31 was $23.7 million or 37 cents a share, up from a year-ago $16.5 million or 25 cents a share, Toromont said yesterday.

The Toronto-based company is a heavy equipment dealer and provider of gas compression systems.

A rise of 36 per cent in the compression group's revenue due to growth in U.S. natural gas compression package sales helped the quarterly sales climb to 15 per cent to $457.7 million from $397.1 million.

The equipment group's revenue dipped five per cent on lower new and used machine sales.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Striking gold

AMY SANCETTA/AP

McDonald's said yesterday its first-quarter profit climbed nearly 4 per cent as more customers came to the Golden Arches for a cheap meal.

AbitibiBowater negotiating for $100M loan from Quebec

FINANCING Insolvent forestry company AbitibiBowater Inc. continues to negotiate with the Quebec government and a Canadian financial institution for up to $100 million in emergency financing, a Quebec court was told yesterday.

The debtor-in-possession loan would rank above other obligations of the Montreal-based company, which has been operating under the protection of Canadian and American courts since last week.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

200 Fairfax Financial Holdings and Avenue Capital Group are willing to provide another $200 million in the United States.

Business in brief

OPPORTUNITIES Coca-Cola Co. chief executive told shareholders yesterday he sees a chance to increase market share during the economic slowdown by pushing its top brands like Coca-Cola in emerging markets like China and in ones where it has solid footing, such as the U.S. and Mexico.

CLASS ACTION TVI Pacific Inc. says it has agreed to settle shareholder class actions in Ontario and Quebec, alleging misrepresentations in financial statements, for $2.1 million.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

11" Vase or 10" Bowl

Mikasa County Claire
Reg: $80.00 Sale:$34.95

Aurora's Spring Sale!

10" Crystal Bowl Made in Poland

Block Madison Bowl
Reg: $75.00 Sale:$44.95

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Kyoto 15" Bronze Vase
Reg: $120.00
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Reg: 60.00 Sale: $19.95

Mikasa Cheers Crystal Glasses
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9" Vase Made in Poland

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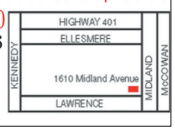

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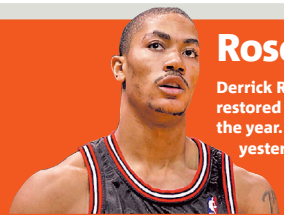
Umpire hit by bat OK

Umpire Kerwin Danley suffered from a "powerful headache" but was apparently otherwise fine yesterday after getting hit by the barrel of a broken bat a night earlier. Danley was taken to hospital after Tuesday's frightening incident in the Rangers' 5-4 win over the Blue Jays. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports



Rose NBA's top rookie

Derrick Rose, who led his hometown Bulls to the playoffs and restored hope to a franchise in disarray, is the NBA's rookie of the year. Rose became the third Bulls player to win the award yesterday, joining Michael Jordan and Elton Brand.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Blue Jays Ryan can't close deal

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Aaron Hill tries to turn a double play last night. Jays closer B.J. Ryan surrendered a game-tying solo home run to Michael Young in the ninth inning to send the game into extra innings. For a complete game recap, visit www.metronews.ca/sports.

Amado Guevara, left, celebrates his goal with Chad Barrett.

TFC scores first home win

MLS RESULT

Toronto FC 1 Chivas USA 0

VS

Midfielder Amado Guevara scored in the 36th minute to give Toronto FC a 1-0 victory over Chivas USA at BMO Field last night.

Toronto collected its first home win of the season after a dispiriting stretch that saw the team go winless in four games.

Toronto moves to 2-2-2 and leapfrogs into a second-place tie with the New England Revolution in the East.

Chivas USA (4-1-1) meanwhile suffered its first loss of the young MLS season after climbing atop the Western Standings with a previously unblemished record.

After a failed Chivas clearance, striker Danny Dichio headed a centring ball to Guevara. The speedy Honduran split two defenders and lashed in his third of the season from about six yards out.

Toronto FC goalkeeper Stefan Frei was rarely tested by Chivas, which was outshot 6-3.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bruins bring their brooms

STANLEY CUP
2009 Playoffs

The Montreal Canadiens' 100th anniversary season ended with a whimper as the Boston Bruins won 4-1 to complete a sweep of their first-round Eastern Conference playoff series in Montreal last night.

The Bruins won the best-of-seven series by a combined score of 17-6.

That dropped the lid on a season that began with Stanley Cup aspirations for the Canadiens and dwindled in the second half of the season amid injuries, controversy and seeing the team put up for sale by owner George Gillett.

Michel Ryder, who was unwanted in Montreal and signed last summer with Boston, scored his third and fourth goals of the series.

David Krejci and Phil Kessel also had goals for the Bruins, who outplayed the Canadiens in every facet of the game.

Unlike Game 3, there was no booing of the U.S national anthem.

RICHARD WOLOWICZ/GETTY IMAGES

Former Hab Michael Ryder celebrates his first-period goal.

N.Y. Rangers 2, Capitals 1

Henrik Lundqvist made 38 saves, half of them in the second period, and the seventh-seeded New York Rangers put the Washington Capitals on the brink of elimination with a 2-1 victory last night.

The Rangers now hold a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven series.

Alex Ovechkin finally scored his first goal of the series for Washington. Ovechkin cut the Capitals' deficit to 2-1 early in the final frame and nearly tied it twice.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

For a recap of Game 4 Blackhawks/Flames series, visit **metronews.ca**

Magic even series with Philly

NBA
2009 Playoffs

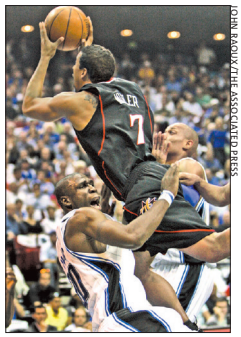
The Orlando Magic built a big lead and avoided another meltdown — barely.

Rookie Courtney Lee had 24 points, Hedo Turkoglu scored 16 and the Magic blew another 18-point lead before beating the Philadelphia 76ers 96-87 last night to even the series at one game apiece.

Dwight Howard had 11 points and 10 rebounds but fouled out late, and Rashard Lewis made a pair of big jumpers in the final minutes to help Orlando get its fourth win in five chances against Philadelphia this season. Andre Miller had 30 points, and Andre Iguodala scored 20 of his 21 points in the second half for the Sixers, who closed the gap to five points and almost erased the same deficit they faced in the series opener.

Howard and Lee played an inside-out game that highlighted a 16-5 third-quarter spurt, a series of put-back dunks from Howard and jumpshots from Lee that overwhelmed Philadelphia.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



JOHN RAOUX/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Andre Miller is fouled by Orlando's Mickael Pietrus.

For recaps of Game 2 of the Heat/Hawks and Hornets/Nuggets series, visit **metronews.ca**

Sports in brief

NBA Flip Saunders has signed a four-year deal to become the Washington Wizards' coach and will be introduced by the team today.

NFL Former Chicago Bear William (The Refrigerator) Perry remains in hospital in serious condition in South Carolina. The 46-year-old has been in hospital to deal with complications from Guillain-Barre Syndrome, a chronic inflammation disorder of the peripheral nerves.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports in brief

NHL Anaheim Ducks forward Bobby Ryan, Columbus Blue Jackets goaltender Steve Mason and Chicago Blackhawks forward Kris Versteeg are the finalists for the Calder Trophy as the NHL's rookie of the year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SCOREBOARD

NHL

STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS
YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Boston 4 Montreal 1 (Bruins win series 4-0)
N.Y. Rangers 2 Washington 1
Chicago at Calgary

NBA

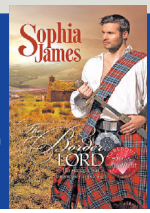
PLAYOFFS
YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Orlando 96 Philadelphia 87
Miami at Atlanta
New Orleans at Denver

MLB

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Boston 10 Minnesota 1 (1st game)
Boston 7 Minnesota 3 (2nd game)
N.Y. Yankees 9 Oakland 7
Chicago White Sox 8 Baltimore 2
Kansas City 2 Cleveland 0
Texas at Toronto
Detroit at L.A. Angels
Tampa Bay at Seattle
Arizona 2 Colorado 0
Pittsburgh 7 Florida 4
San Francisco 1 San Diego 0
Atlanta at Washington
Milwaukee at Philadelphia
L.A. Dodgers at Houston
Cincinnati at Chicago Cubs
N.Y. Mets at St. Louis

SPECIAL FOCUS ON:
First-time homebuyers

Metro Homes



From TV to print

Colin McAllister and Justin Ryan, of Colin & Justin's Home Heist, will be on the covers of two May releases from Harlequin Books. Colin is seen here on the cover of The Border Lord, by Sophia James. Available May 7.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

The FLY Condo suites, located on Front Street West, just east of Spadina Avenue, by Empire Communities uses angles and complementary colours to create a very modern and sleek look.

First-timers

If you're thinking of buying your first home, check out the following stories :

- What first-time homebuyers should know, p. 18
- A look at Toronto's real estate market, p. 20
- The importance of home inspections, p. 20
- Is buying an income property for you?, p. 22
- The ins and outs of getting a mortgage, p. 23
- How to decorate your home on a budget, p. 24

Blending elements together

Suite Talk

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

For downtown Toronto dwellers that don't quite fit the mould of the young clubber of King Street West, or the conservative, high fashion hobnobber at Yonge and Bloor streets, there's a new development in town.

"If you smash those two people together, you get the people who live at FLY," said Alessandro Munge, one half of Munge Leung Design Associates. The firm fashioned the suites of FLY Condos by Empire Communities, located on Front Street West, just east of Spadina Avenue.

The blended contemporary client the suites are designed for is quickly realized in the building's lobby; a two-storied entrance, marked with sculptural, green cut-glass columns. "If you walk in it, you feel like you're in this garden of angular forms," said Munge.

The angles continue upstairs, with several geometric, angled standalone walls dividing areas of the open concept suite. "The building is very modern on the interior, so we tried to communicate a little bit of that with these dry wall panels," said Munge. "They're relatively small spaces, but if you carve them out well, you can get a pretty efficient space."

Due to the small size, Munge said he tried to keep the colour palate very simple — visible in the hardwood floors that complement the kitchen cabinetry — to ensure any stronger colours don't appear disjointed. "There's almost a bleeding effect between materials, so anything you add to your space complements it."

Munge said a kitchen could invade other parts of such a bijou space, but that FLY's fully integrated appliances, from panel-fronted fridge and dishwasher to flush microwave, make it work. "Everything is sleek," he said.

FLY suites range from 401 to 1,112 square feet. Prices start at $159,900 and extend to the mid-$500,000s. For more information and to register for the grand opening on May 9, visit www.flycondos.com or call 416.979.1333.

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The Prairie End	4107	A	2,119	4	~~$374,990~~	$354,990	$20,000
The Canyon	4105, 4106	A	2,094	4	~~$366,990~~	$349,990	$17,000

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Monarch

More online
For more home and condo news and columns, check out Metronews.ca.

Do your homework when buying

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

First-time buyers tend to be enthusiastic about getting on the property ladder, Calgary-based realtor Aphrodite Karamitsanis says.

Owning property may cause renters to rejoice at the thought of actually having something to show for the money they're spending. But realtor Aphrodite Karamitsanis warns not to let that initial thrill become overkill.

"First-time buyers are very enthusiastic and sometimes very unrealistic about what they can afford and what they'd like to own," said Karamitsanis, the Calgary-based agent for Royal LePage Canada.

Completing one's financial homework — particularly determining down payment and monthly payments — is the most critical thing for first-time buyers to do before they begin even looking at properties, so they understand what they can afford, she said. Then, the first consideration should be "location, location, location."

"It's still the operative phrase in real estate," said Karamitsanis, "where they're going to live, and what they're looking for in terms of their home — how many bedrooms, how many bathrooms and how finished the home is."

"Sweat equity" is something she said first-time buyers should especially consider when purchasing a home. That's how much work one is willing to spend renovating areas of the home to build financial equity. Kitchens and bathrooms are the most expensive rooms to renovate, she said, so she recommends new buyers work from the bottom up. "If they buy a home with an unfinished basement, one of the best ways to build equity is to finish the basement."

Manual labour must be a labour of love when deciding to buy a home — the chief difference between owning a house and a condominium, said Toronto realtor Robert Doyle of Bosley Real Estate.

"With a condominium, you really only own what's behind your door and maybe a parking spot. The whole benefit of ownership is being able to plant your garden and grow your grass and shovel your driveway in the winter ... the true Canadian activity of home ownership," he said with a chuckle.

The grass isn't the only thing necessarily greener with home ownership. Homes and condos alike are increasingly embracing eco-friendly technologies.

"There's definitely an advantage to buying green," Doyle said. "We have the technology now that we can make things more efficient, safer and better for the environment, not only for ourselves, but for generations afterwards."

That's not to mention the advantage Doyle said going green has on your wallet; a sure aid to one of the greatest financial investments one can make.

"If you own a home, having a home energy audit done — an eco home audit — is definitely an eye-opening experience in terms of cost savings."

Want a condo?

According to Royal LePage realtor Aphrodite Karamitsanis, purchasing a condo is a lifestyle decision that includes the following factors:

- No yard maintenance
- Owning a share in a larger corporation
- Less freedom to make structural changes
- Decisions are often made for you

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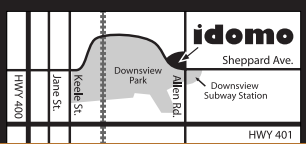

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T.O. market friendlier for first-time buyers

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

The latest data on Greater Toronto Area home and condo sales won't exactly leave the city's sellers jumping for joy.

RealNet Canada Inc. numbers show that GTA new-home sales have dropped 62 per cent in the first quarter of 2009, versus 2008.

But with sale prices continuing to fall, Bank of Montreal Director of Mortgage, John Turner, says today's real estate environment will be a little bit friendlier to first-time buyers.

"As a homebuyer, you're likely going to get a better price and get it on better terms, on your terms," says Turner. "Now is likely a good time to buy."

But sourcing out the great deals from the good ones, the best mortgages from the better ones, requires time, effort and help from the professionals.

"There's a lot of information available on the Internet, but the best advice I can give for first-time buyers is to surround themselves with experts — a lawyer, a realtor, a mortgage specialist," says Turner.

Brad Lamb, of Toronto's Brad J. Lamb Realty Inc., says that first-time buyers are "the lifeblood of the real estate industry around the world" and crucial to the market's recovery.

Last Tuesday, at a Bank of Montreal panel on Canada's real estate market, Lamb maintained a hopeful outlook. There, he said that even though March sales through the industry's Multiple Listing Service fell by seven per cent year-over-year, it is a positive sign compared to drops of 45 to 55 per cent in the final months of 2008. "People woke up in January and said, 'The world is not over,'" says Lamb. "And they started spending money again." He says first-timers need to conquer their cold feet."When people are spending large amounts of money, there is a fear of losing," says Lamb. "And a certain amount of momentum needs to build to get over the fear."

While Toronto's King West neighbourhood has proven to be a hot spot for first-time buyers on a budget, Lamb says other parts of the city are starting to attract first-timer attention.

"Downtown east has a great future potential," he says of the area around lower Jarvis and Church streets. "The other great place is Riverside, east of the Don Valley Parkway ... And it's 10 to 15 per cent cheaper than King West right now."

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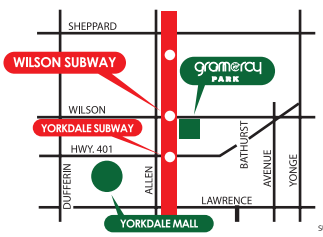

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Home inspections crucial, experts say

LEYLA EMORY
for Metro Canada

It's what's inside that counts. Just ask your realtor.

"You fall in love with something and you see what's in front of you, but a home inspector can get to the nitty-gritty of a place, like the mechanics and structure," says Tatiana Londono, founder of Chartered Real Estate Agents at Londono Realty Group and host of HGTV's Property Shop. "Hiring a home inspector can avoid all sorts of headaches."

Home inspection is a crucial step in the home buying process. But an inspection is only as good as the inspector. "The number one mistake I see people make is looking for the house before the home inspector," says Mike Holmes of Holmes on Homes and author of The Holmes Inspection. "It's like getting the trailer before the horse. When you find the house that you like, usually it's down to crunch time and you're willing to hire anyone that's got a pulse to come in and do an inspection."

So start inspecting early. There are plenty of ways to go about finding a good home inspector. Sandra Rinomato, host of HGTV's Property Virgins, suggests going on the recommendation of a realtor but acknowledges that this can be sticky. Realtors routinely deal with home inspectors and have first-hand knowledge of their work. But there can be conflicts of interest.

"Sometimes agents are in with their inspectors and they'll make an inspection pass," says Londono. "But a lot of times buyers have no idea how to look for an inspector."

To avoid liabilities, both Londono and Rinomato provide the names of three to five home inspectors they've worked with in the past and let their clients make the final choice.

HGTV PHOTO
Ask home inspectors "1,001 questions," advises home building expert Mike Holmes.

Here's where your own inspection comes in. Whether going on a recommendation or picking up the Yellow Pages, the key is to ask questions.

"Ask 1,001 questions," says Holmes. "How long have you been in the business? What did you specialize in before? Do you have a background in building, and if so, what is it? How long were you doing that? Can I have a sample report of what you've given someone else?"

For Holmes, it's getting inside that counts: "If they say all I need is a flashlight, a ladder and a notepad, that's not good enough ... I use thermographic imaging cameras, air quality tools, snake cameras that can go through every little crevasse that a mouse can. If they have tools like this, it excites me. It means that they care."

Share your story

- Mike Holmes is looking for homeowners who have had bad home inspections and are now faced with repairs they didn't anticipate. Go to makeitright.ca, and you could end up on TV.

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Rental suite can be a great investment

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

RAFAEL BRUSILOW/FOR METRO CANADA

A home valued at $350,000 could pay off as much as an extra $1,000 a month, says Income Property host Scott McGillivray.

Is your mortgage weighing you down and draining your monthly coffers? Maybe it's time to put that empty basement to work for you by turning it into a legal rental suite.

Scott McGillivray, host of the hit show Income Property on HGTV, says many homeowners, particularly first-timers, don't quite realize how much income potential lurks within their own home.

"A lot of first-time buyers don't even consider having an income suite in their home and everyone should consider it. It's a great investment for the future," McGillivray said.

With the right circumstances and proper renovations, a home valued at just $350,000 could pay off as much as an extra $1,000 every month with a good apartment unit, he says.

When looking for a home with income potential, don't go overboard, McGillivray says — choose practicality over fantasy.

"Be modest with what you can afford and be reasonable with what you really need. Don't be greedy," McGillivray said.

One of the biggest mistakes McGillivray sees homeowners make is trying to rent out a dingy basement apartment without renovating it. Invest some money, he says, and make your basement apartment somewhere you would personally love to live — it'll lead to better tenants and higher rents in the long run.

"If you're going to rent out a space, make sure that it's up to you own standards. Don't expect people will settle for less than you would settle for. Rather than charging less, fix the place up so you can charge more. You'll get better tenants that way," McGillivray said.

If you're thinking of buying a home with some extra income potential, McGillivray suggests looking for a few things:

• A separate entrance. It allows for privacy and convenience.
• Good ceiling height. If it's too low for you to live in, it's too low to rent.
• Decent window sizes. Light is important and makes an apartment much more livable.
• Extra parking. A spot can be worth up to $100 per month.

If the seller says the property is already tenanted, check to make sure and ask to see an up-to-date zoning permit for the apartment.

"Know what you're getting yourself into and don't make assumptions. Be smart and look into things," McGillivray said.

Be aware that many suburban areas don't allow rental apartments in private homes, so check to make sure having an apartment is legal before counting rental income in your home-buying calculations.

McGillivray offers more tips and advice on his website at incomepropertyeducation.com and Income Property airs Mondays at 8:30 p.m. ET on HGTV. He hopes more people will consider using their home to generate extra income.

"It's all about taking action. If you can get your house to work for you, do it!" McGillivray said.

Don't discount real estate agents

LegalMatters

Jeffrey D. Cowan
jeff@cowanandtaylor.com

Q I have engaged a real estate agent to help me look for my first home. I feel a bit uneasy about this person as they weren't referred to me and I am not sure to trust them. Aren't they just looking for a property to sell and they don't care about me?

A My answer to that question is an absolutely not! There are tons of agents who provide their services with the absolute goal of providing their client with an all-encompassing service. My experience is that there are as many of the few "bad apples" in any profession. The cream will rise to the top and if you have a real estate agent you are comfortable with, you are probably in the right neighbourhood.

As the spring market is upon us and there is more to look at in terms of every price bracket, you should remember that your agent (if he or she is a good one) will have a fairly defined scope of what you are looking for. If they are showing you 40 houses — unless the market is really hot — then you have not articulated to them or they have not asked exactly what you want. Most agents are quite discerning and can narrow down what would be appropriate for you in a few minutes.

In general, real estate agents know the market much better than we do. Some people like to trade stocks on their own but personally, I trust my real estate agent to look for me even though I practice in the area of real estate law and have a fairly decent knowledge of present conditions and market fluctuations.

Remember, when you are purchasing, it is the vendor who pays the commission, not the seller.

However, you might say, "Well, we can cut a private deal and each save half the commission." In this market with so little inventory to look for and interest rates that are so low, it is tough to find both that gem you want and at the right price.

Real estate agents earn their commission and should not be discounted or avoided.

Jeffrey D. Cowan is with Cowan & Taylor, Barristers & Solicitors. The info in this article should not be relied upon as legal advice.

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No reason to fear the 'M' word, experts say

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

For most new home buyers that don't have the capital to fully pay for their property, the pleasure of purchase can be oft overshadowed by the dreaded 'M' word.

"A lot of people have the idea that a mortgage is actually the biggest debt of their life," said Bruna Anacleto, Toronto mortgage specialist for Royal Bank of Canada. "It's really not. It's an investment."

It's also the only property loan homebuyers can acquire, outside of one from family and friends. And the first step Anacleto recommends toward acquiring a mortgage is obtaining a pre-approval, which she said both qualifies you for the loan and gives you a sense of how much you're financially qualified to purchase.

So before setting your heart on that $500,000 dream home, a pre-approval will assess if you can really afford it. "You may think, with your salary, you can, but you're not taking into consideration your debt load," she said.

And what qualifies as debt isn't always so apparent. Anacleto said most people don't know that a line of credit, for example, counts as debt, in full. "You may have a zero balance on that line of credit, but we assume that you've withdrawn the whole thing," she said. "The reason for that is because that's credit you can obtain at any point in time, so we want to ensure you can pay that back if that happens."

Paying back a mortgage over tens of years may seem like a daunting task. But there are strategic ways to do it. Barry Rathburn is a mobile mortgage specialist for TD Canada Trust on Vancouver Island. He recommends accelerating your payment by paying an amount higher than the minimum required, that you feel comfortable with, to make repaying more flexible down the road.

"One of your benefits is that you can up to double your payments," said Rathburn. "Having the privilege to increase and decrease your payment at will is a great financial planning tool to manage your cash flow."

Mortgage tips

TD specialist Barry Rathburn offers the following advice:

- You can pre-pay 15 per cent of your original mortgage balance each year. If completed yearly, your mortgage would be paid off in about seven years.
- Obtain mortgage insurance, to cover the amount of mortgage debt if you or your spouse falls ill or dies.
- Get approved for the longest possible repayment period to decrease the amount paid in the long run.

Don't avoid regular repairs and maintenance on your cottage to put your feet up and relax instead, says Bryan Baeumler.

Cottages require maintenance, too

DisasterDIY
Bryan Baeumler
HGTV host

Bryan Baeumler is host of Disaster DIY: Cottage Edition, airing tonight at 9 p.m. on HGTV. Visit hgtv.ca/disasterdiy for streamed episodes and exclusive content.

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine you're at a cottage. The faint aroma of mouldy lumber drifts by on the breeze, and your leaking hot tub sits on a rotting deck with your favourite sports car parked below — what would you do? If you're CB, you take a few phone calls, and head out on the lake with your favourite magazine to float around for a few hours. I can't say I blame him.

His girlfriend Janice, on the other hand, blamed him enough to invite me up for a visit. With a crew, a truck full of lumber, some tools and my seadoos in tow, I was on my way to the lake. Before we could get to work however, we had to locate CB — which became a daily ritual. Like CB, most of us head to the cottage to relax, using 'It's OK, it's just the cottage' as an excuse to avoid regular maintenance and much-needed repairs. Although CB's party deck off the front of the cottage had a roof, the floor had been built on an angle. The railings were dangerously low to preserve the view, which presented the opportunity for a 12-foot fall to the hard ground below. The moisture sandwich of carpet, plywood and deck boards was rotting out from under them thanks to a leaking hot tub, and to top it all off, his prized sports car — parked under the structure — was in danger of having a rooftop deck.

I had to find CB every morning before we could get to work; it was like fishing, although I'm usually more successful with a rod and reel. Once we reeled him in, I taught him how to replace the support posts and structure of the deck to bring it up to code and make it level. After waiting for what seemed like an eternity for him to field numerous phone calls, I taught him how to replace the decking to allow for drainage, while keeping out the mosquitoes. After a quick lesson from CB on the imaginary concept of "torsional rigidity" in deck building, we built railings that were not only up to code, but allowed for a great view of the lake as a bonus.

Safe deck, great view, happy girlfriend — time to hit the lake!

Bryan Baeumler is host of Disaster DIY: Cottage Edition. The show airs Thursdays at 9 p.m. on HGTV.

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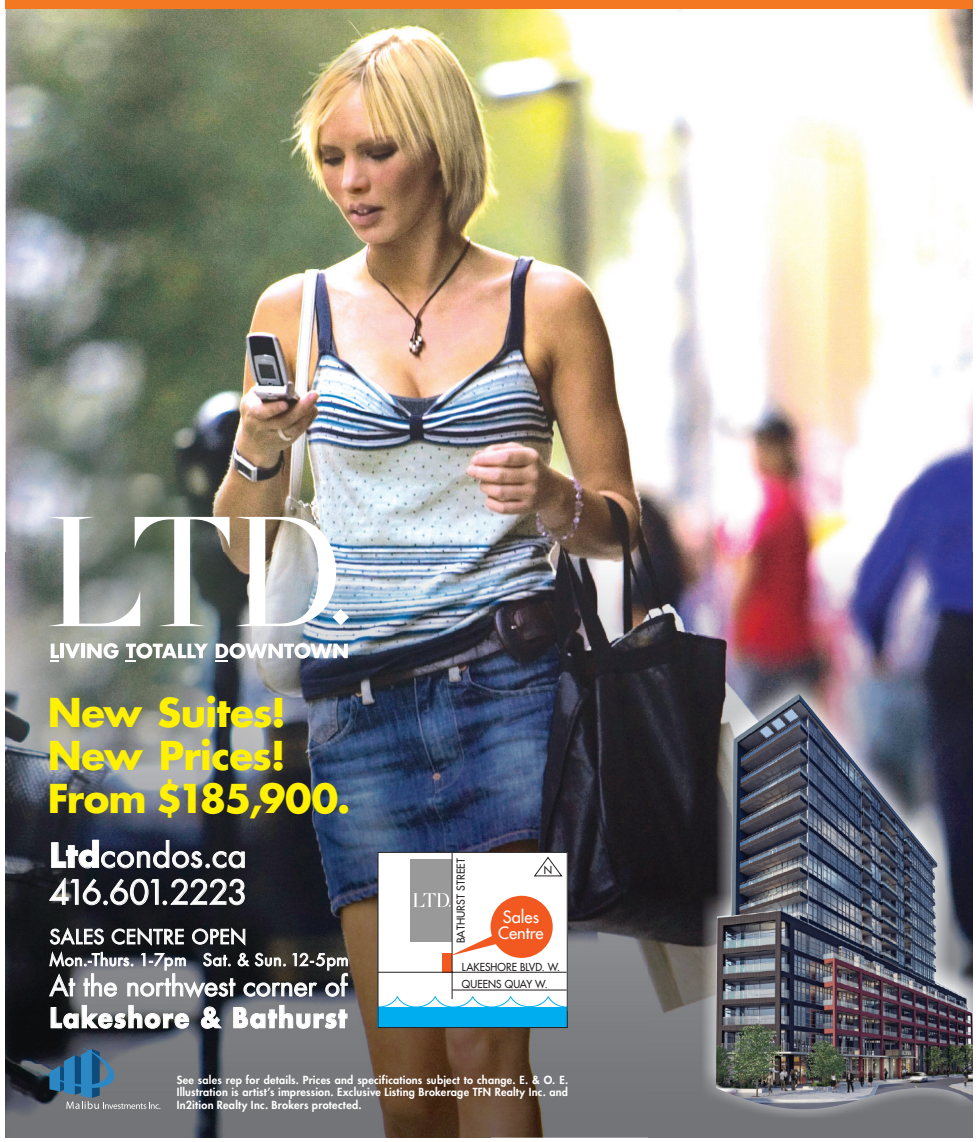

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IKEA PHOTO

Stylish accessories need not break the bank, such as this Alvine Bar duvet cover with two pillowcases, $39.99 at Ikea.

Budget-friendly decor

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

Owning your first home means finally having a space to call your own.

And, one of the best ways to make sure that space truly conveys your personality is through interior design.

While the new mortgage and some minor renovations may leave your pockets a little lighter, three of Canada's top designers reveal that beautiful home decor can still be achieved on budget.

Toronto-based interior designer Meredith Heron, of Restaurant Makeover fame, says the first step for first-timers is to not take any steps at all.

"Slow the process down. Don't build Rome in one day." Meredith Heron

"If they can invest in three to six months of not doing anything, that is an amazing investment," says Heron.

She says she recommends living in the space for a while, feeling it out and saving up some money for the project.

"Slow the process down. Don't build Rome in one day," she adds.

After that, Heron says a good way to start is by choosing furniture and paint in neutral shades.

"It's all about what you can do when you have a blank canvas," she says. "White is friendly."

Designer Glenn Dixon, host of W Network's Take This House and Sell It!, agrees that it is important to have neutral basics in place before the design fun really begins.

"Then, one of the best ways to make a space your own is colour," he says.

Dixon says smaller items like throws, pillows and accessories in funky trend colours can all be sourced on the cheap. But before tackling the budget design stores, clearance racks, antique boutiques or flea markets, Dixon says it's also important to have a plan.

"My best advice for people is to research magazines for ideas," he says. "Then create a book of inspirations with the clippings."

Ada Bonini, principal of Vancouver's Bob's Your Uncle Design, says artwork is the final step to tie a room together. If you can't afford gallery pieces, Bonini offers inexpensive DIY solutions.

"One of the quickest things to do ... is to go and get some canvas from the art store and practise your painting abilities," she says.

If abstract painting isn't your thing, Bonini says another way to get the fine art look is to frame a series of reprints from your favourite art books, or even black-and-white family photos.

But no matter how big or small your budget, all three designers agree that creating the perfect space doesn't happen overnight.

"You don't need to have the dream home right away," says Dixon. "It is something that evolves over time."

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

Revitalizing downtown east

This spring, The Daniels Corporation will offer an unprecedented opportunity to live in a spectacular condominium at the corner of Dundas and Parliament, in the heart of Toronto's Downtown East. OneCole — the first condominium within the revitalization of Regent Park has already received an overwhelming response especially from first-time buyers. This exciting new condominium will be priced from an incredible $189,900 and Daniels is offering an innovative Down Payment Program that will help first-time buyers realize their dream of homeownership with the absolute best opportunity on the market today.

Understanding that the deposit is the biggest hurdle many home buyers face, purchasers at OneCole can buy with only a 5 per cent deposit! In order to make the deposit easy and manageable for new homeowners, Daniels is offering their Gradual Deposit Payment Plan. Simply pay $3,000 as an initial deposit with the Agreement of Purchase and Sale, and then $1,000 each month until you reach 5 per cent of the purchase price!

Plus, if you're thinking it doesn't get any easier than that, you have a surprise in store. Known for thinking out of the box when it comes to helping people realize their dream of homeownership, Daniels is going above and beyond at OneCole. Qualified buyers can take advantage of the Down Payment Advantage Program, which provides an interest-free and payment-free loan for an additional 10 per cent of the purchase price, turning your initial 5 per cent deposit into a 15 per cent down payment! This program allows qualified buyers to carry a mortgage for only 85 per cent of the purchase price, which means lower monthly carrying costs — and the most attractive opportunity to get into homeownership in the city today.

OneCole, at the corner of Dundas and Parliament, features a 20,000 square-foot SkyPark, which is elevated three storeys above the city.

Daniels and RBC Royal Bank have been working hard to cap mortgage interest rates at an incredibly low level — and considering we're currently experiencing historical lows when it comes to mortgage rates, this is the perfect opportunity for first-time buyers to lock in to a great rate at OneCole!

In addition to all of this, OneCole is already under construction, which means purchasers will be able to move-in and as early as this year!

Nestled between Cabbagetown and the Distillery District — two of Toronto's trendiest neighbourhoods — and surrounded by many of the city's best amenities and attractions, OneCole will feature four national retailers located on the ground floor of the building. Residents will have direct access to a Sobeys grocery store, Tim Hortons, RBC Royal Bank, and a Rogers store. Adding the ultimate in convenience, TTC is literally outside their door, and the Don Valley Parkway and the Gardiner Expressway are moments away. Suite owners can also walk to the incredible array of local shops and restaurants within the downtown core.

The OneCole experience begins with 24-hour Concierge and a Resident Services Director located in the designer-decorated contemporary Lobby. OneCole will also be home to Toronto's only 20,000 square-foot SkyPark, elevated three-storeys above the city. This fully functional park will have full-size trees, barbecue stations, seating areas, and open spaces for picnicking.

Leading out to the SkyPark will be the Wi-Fi enabled ClubOne, including The Mixer, complete with cozy seating, a two-storey, 3-sided fireplace and a reading corner, a flat screen television, and a café bar. Overlooking The Mixer is The Loft Lounge with billiards, game tables and foosball. The Party Room features a catering kitchen, and the Fitness Studio will offer the latest in cardio and weight training equipment and a stretching zone perfect for yoga and Pilates.

There's something for everyone at OneCole, an eco-friendly green condominium built to the new LEED Gold Certification Standard. Choices include studios to three-bedroom suite designs and a limited collection of urban townhomes. Suite sizes range from 442 to 1,276 square feet and include impressive appointments and offer spectacular views in every direction.

To learn more about how you may qualify for Daniels' 10 per cent Down Payment Advantage Program and to attend the OneCole Preview Sales Event this spring, register today at onecole.ca or call 416-955-0559.

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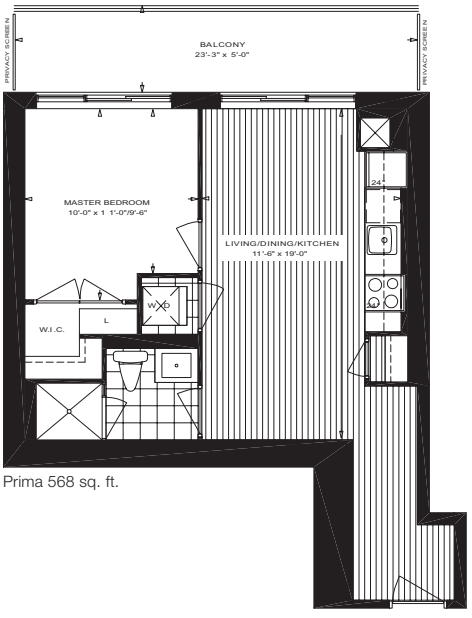

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Decor

Read more in the April issue of STYLE AT HOME magazine. ON SALE NOW! styleathome.com | styleathome

Let's take it outside

Increasingly, we demand more from all our living spaces, and our exterior rooms are no exception.

A functional and relaxing deck or patio offers us a welcome incentive to slow down, as well as room to gather for casual meals and conversation. Conversely, a small city balcony provides an intimate spot to dine and perhaps a little area for quiet reflection. Here's Style At Home's guide:

Top right design

A compact city balcony like this one can be an oasis when it's orchestrated for relaxation. Even in tight spaces, it's usually possible to accommodate two to four diners. Position your table (a bistro table is a good choice) against an exterior wall for maximum shelter. Select an outdoor rug to define seating areas. Choose comfortable chairs for dining and reading.

Container planting is a satisfying way to enjoy a small garden. To eliminate endless trips to and from the kitchen faucet, look for planter boxes with built-in self-watering reservoirs; some hold enough water for up to four weeks, releasing it gradually through irrigation holes. If you love to cook, grow fragrant herbs like rosemary and mint. And remember, no room, whether indoors or outdoors, is truly personal without a few valued objects.

A functional and relaxing deck or patio offers us a welcome incentive to slow down, as well as room to gather for casual meals and conversation.

Bottom right design

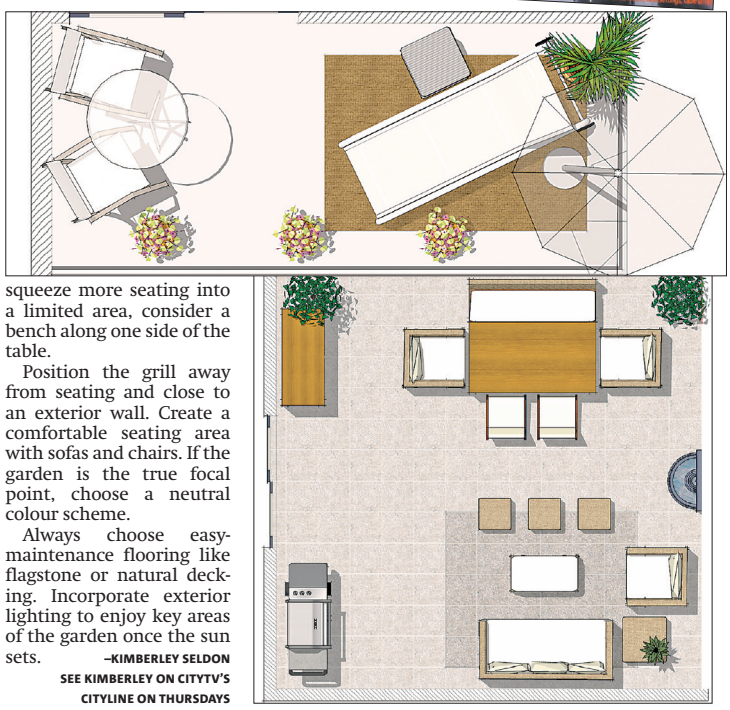
When entertaining is a priority, the dining area usually commands pride of place so position the table to enjoy the best views. To squeeze more seating into a limited area, consider a bench along one side of the table.

Position the grill away from seating and close to an exterior wall. Create a comfortable seating area with sofas and chairs. If the garden is the true focal point, choose a neutral colour scheme.

Always choose easy-maintenance flooring like flagstone or natural decking. Incorporate exterior lighting to enjoy key areas of the garden once the sun sets.

–KIMBERLEY SELDON

SEE KIMBERLEY ON CITYTV'S CITYLINE ON THURSDAYS



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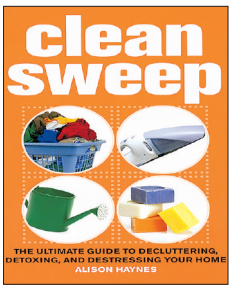

Home Library

Sweeping clean

BOOKS Clean Sweep by Alison Haynes, $15, Skyhorse, softcover, 360 pages.

Perfect for the eco-minded homeowner, this book contains safety and green cleaning tips for the entire house and garden. Learn how to recognize baddies like lead, mercury, asbestos, mould and more, then discover better cleaning methods for every item and room in your home, from carpets and computers to upholstered furnishings and bathrooms. Features recipes for creating your own natural cleaners. –JENN HOULIHAN

Home Library

Gilt-rimmed style

BOOKS

High Style by Ron Woodson and Jaime Rummerfield, $78, Chronicle, hardcover, 255 pages.

Don't be fooled by High Style's gilt edges and ornately embossed cover — it's more than just a pretty face. Woodson and Rummerfield, interior designers based in Los Angeles, share their glamorous designs in more than 300 photos. –JENN HOULIHAN

Window shopping **Party like a rock star in these rockin' chairs**

In striking shapes and colours, these rockers are sure to sweep you off your feet. –LAUREN FLANAGAN

Left: Kur Dir Ka, $799US Generate Designs (gnr8.biz)

Goa $1,210, Chair Source (charisource.ca)

Matt in Sherlock Copper $699, EQ3 (eq3.com)

Buttercup $1,197, Urban Mode (urbanmode.com)

Hudson in polished finish $2,198, Sparkability (Sparkability.com)

NINA TEIXEIRA PHOTOS

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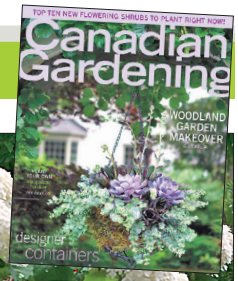

Bloom service

Brighten your garden with these new flowering shrubs

Indispensable for adding structure and colour to the garden, flowering shrubs also artfully provide that critical mid-storey link between herbaceous flowerbeds and large trees.

We love these new introductions to the market. Some display breakthroughs in leaf colour (My Monet weigela), while some others feature increased flower size (Incrediball smooth hydrangea) or repeated blooming cycles (Bloomerang purple lilac).

Incrediball smooth hydrangea (Hydrangea arborescens 'Abetwo') Size: 1.4 metres high, 1.2 metres wide Zone: 4 It's similar to the 'Annabelle' hydrangea, but Incrediball has four times the flowers on massive corymbs perched on strong, thick stems that won't flop over. Blooms on new wood; prefers rich, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade; attracts butterflies. Introduced by Spring Meadow Nursery in Michigan.

Bloomerang purple lilac (Syringa x purple 'Penda') Size: 1.5 metres high, 1.5 metres wide Zone: 3 A revolution in lilac breeding, Bloomerang first puts on a show of fragrant, lavender-blue flowers in spring, then continues to bloom sporadically all summer long, only to produce a second glut of flowers in autumn. Regular deadheading will encourage more blooms on these compact, well-branched shrubs. Introduced by Spring Meadow Nursery.

My Monet weigela (Weigela florida 'Verweig') Size: 50 centimetres high, 50 centimetres wide Zone: 4 The first dwarf variegated weigela, My Monet is a branch sport (naturally occurring mutation) of W. f. 'Tango.' Pink spring flowers are framed by foliage streaked with pink (in full sun) or white (in shade). Slow growth habit; shrub goes dormant in early fall before other weigelas.

— STEPHEN WESTCOTT-GRATTON

clippings

Getting to know the iris family

ARMCHAIR GARDENER The Iris Family: Natural History and Classification by Peter Goldblatt and John C. Manning, Timber Press, $109.95 Look inside the 66 genera that make up the family Iridaceae, not to mention their 2,000-plus species. Naturally, the iris family contains the genus Iris, but it also contains Crocus and several genera that we often treat as tender bulbs (Crocosmia, Ixia, Gladiolus and Freesia).

— STEPHEN WESTCOTT-GRATTON

PROVEN WINNERS PHOTOS

Incrediball smooth hydrangea (Hydrangea arborescens 'Abetwo').

Bloomerang purple lilac (Syringa x purple 'Penda').

My Monet weigela (Weigela florida 'Verweig').

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Inviting birds to your backyard

HomeScape
Sylvia Putz
metronews.ca/homescape

With gorgeous spring weather greeting me more often on these mornings, I am starting to watch the birds as they go about their springtime business.

And I'm well aware of what business that is. And I know from the past year that there is a space on our new and partially built trellis, that is a highly attractive nesting site. Last spring, my husband and I were awoken by the daily insistent peeping of baby birds at 6 a.m.

Birds can provide a daily show as well eat pesky mosquitoes.

I am kind of looking forward to it. Kind of, because I do not normally rise that early, but yet, the antics of a bird family is absorbing, interesting and quite often humorous. Maybe I'm getting old, but it's a lot better than some of the television shows I watch.

Besides providing a daily show of chirping, warbling, squawking and flapping about, birds also impart benefits such as eating mosquitoes, as well as plant-nibbling nasties such as aphids and grubs. Yes, they keep early hours; yes, they can make a racket and yes, they can nibble on some species that you may grow for your own enjoyment, such as strawberries or sweet cherries. And yes, they sometimes build nests in places you may not prefer, such as in your dryer vent or chimney.

But these things can be managed. Besides, the pleasure they give by just being there, providing song, colour and movement, is considerable. For most of us, there is also some satisfaction in providing a habitat that supports and nurtures birds.

Even if your yard is small, there are some basics to make your yard more friendly to birds. Put out the welcome sign by planting some suitable species. That means plants that will provide some of the basic needs that birds have: food, shelter and nesting sites.

To provide food, plant trees, shrubs and plants with berries or seed heads. Mountain ash, with its orange berries, is one tree that birds love. Other shrubs and plants that birds love for their fruit or berries are holly or mulberry bushes (you'll need both male and female plants to get berries), flowering dogwood, sweet cherry trees, serviceberry, and Virginia creeper.

Plant flowers with seed pods such as coneflowers, black-eyed susans, sedums, sunflowers and asters. Don't be too quick to clean up garden waste, since twigs and leaves are used to build nests in spring.

When you choose trees and plants to populate your yard, stick to native trees which birds recognize and are familiar with, such as mountain ash, silver birch, hawthorne, crab apple and hazel. If you've got a large yard, larger trees such as oak and beech provide habitat for birds which populate a higher niche in the canopy.

Untrimmed hedges of native species provide superior habitat to a wide range of birds. Plant climbing vines against fences and walls, increasing the amount of habitat.

If you put out birdhouses or boxes, be patient. Sometimes, birds are suspicious of something that looks new, and will only venture close when the box starts to weather. If you put out bird feeders, you will need to experiment with different seeds, as you'll need to discover what works in your area. Another important requirement for locating birdfeeders and houses is that they should be out of the reach of the huge number of roaming neighbourhood cats. Finally, birds need water as well, so a bird-bath, close to a bush or tree for those times when a quick escape is necessary, helps put out the welcome mat as well.

Then, you can sit back and enjoy the show!

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

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Style

Scent of an actress

This spring Oscar-winning actress Halle Berry introduces her first signature fragrance, Halle by Halle Berry. Partnering with Coty Inc., the former Catwoman has created a sensuous fragrance that incorporates ingredients like mimosa, fig, hibiscus flower, sandalwood, musk and amber. Halle by Halle Berry is available at major drug and mass retailers nationwide for $35/30ml and $49/50ml. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

H&M welcomes Williamson

British designer brings his trademark boho, colourful clothing to the retail market

Will there be mayhem at H&M? Today, the mega retailer will unleash its Matthew Williamson collection worldwide — its latest designer collaboration, already expected to draw crowds of enthusiastic fashion consumers.

Williamson is the latest designer to create a capsule collection exclusively for the Swedish chain, following such past successes created by Karl Lagerfeld, Viktor & Rolf, Roberto Cavalli and most recently Comme des Garçons, all of which caused a frenzy with overnight campouts at H&M stores and racks that were picked bare minutes after the stores opened.

In Toronto, the Williamson merchandise will be offered only at the Eaton Centre and Bloor St. W. locations.

But with the economy steeped in a recession, will the H&M magic continue? Will the fashion crowd turn out prepared to power-shop for designs they'll barely have a chance to see let alone try on? And who is Matthew Williamson anyway?

William is a British designer known for jet-setting clothes in vibrant colours and exotic prints.

He spent several seasons as creative director at Emilio Pucci, a label synonymous with the kaleidoscopic colours and patterns and images of starlets on luxurious vacations. And for H&M his trademark boho deluxe verve continues.

But do enough fashion shoppers in Toronto recognize the cool quotient of the brand?

H&M marketers are banking on it.

"I wanted to create a strong urban collection fused with the brand's signature symbols and shapes. It's been fascinating to search back through my archives to isolate the most iconic pieces, then rework them for H&M," Williamson told British Vogue recently.

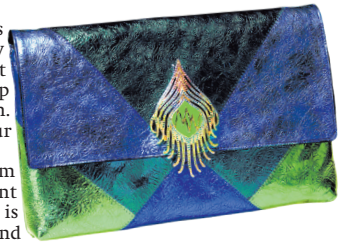
His iconic peacock feather motifs? His graphic butterfly prints? You can find it all there in this cheap and chic collection. Even the bold colour blocking looks from his recent collection is present and accounted for in a swank-looking cobalt blue and hot pink tuxedo.

"I wanted to create a strong urban collection fused with the brand's signature symbols and shapes. It's been fascinating to search back through my archives to isolate the most iconic pieces, then rework them for H&M."
Designer Matthew Williamson

So this week we'll know if H&M still has the magic touch.

But should you sleep in and miss it all, take heart: the company will be rolling out a second part to this collection on May 14 that will include not only beachwear but also a menswear line — which will be a first from this designer. That, of course, will just make it that much more coveted.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES


Multi-coloured metallic clutch, $69.90.

Leather grommeted vest, $149.

Multi-coloured sequinned dress, $99.90.

Teal peacock cardigan, $99.90.

Pink dress, $149, studded belt, $59.90.

Second collection

- Matthew Williamson's second H&M collection (due out May 14) will be available in 29 stores across Canada, the first time that an H&M designer collection will be on sale in most of its stores.

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SEAWORLD

Splash some fun in shades of blue

Metal and resin-bead chandelier earrings ($15, at Aldo Accessories)

Silk tunic ($85, at Banana Republic)

PVC handbag ($35, at Aldo)

Floral tiered silk dress, Nougat London ($265, 1-888-356-9226)

Resin-bead bracelets ($45 each, at The Bay)

Leather and wood platform wedge sandals ($100, at Aldo)

For more cool spring looks, check out the ELLE event this Saturday, April 25th, at the Carlu! Denis Desro, ELLE Canada's editor-in-chief (fashion), will showcase an exclusive spring runway report of the season's hottest fashion trends, from the jumpsuit to the wedge sandal.

Runway finalists reconnect

By **LAURA DECARUFEL**
Senior Editor

Fashion might not always be pretty, as Iman says, but it's always compelling. This season of Project Runway Canada was full of drama, from two contestants leaving the show for health reasons (on the very first episode!), to the uproar that ensued after one aspiring designer (ahem, Brandon) revealed that he was unfamiliar with the work of fashion legend Yves Saint Laurent.

But the real news was on the runway, particularly in the creations of the top three finalists: Jessica Biffi, Jason Meyers and Sunny Fong, the talented Toronto designer who was crowned the winner last week. "The biggest surprise is how passionate viewers are about the show," says Fong. "How little things like me hugging my mother on the runway made people tear up. It's amazing."

This Saturday afternoon, Fong, Biffi, Meyers and their PRC mentor Brian Bailey are joining forces for a special fashion show during the all-day ELLE event at the Carlu. The designers will be showcasing their finale collections, which debuted during Toronto Fashion Week in March. "The finale show was a closed show, so only a select few were able to experience it," explains Fong. "It will be really cool for the public to have the same 'live' experience." Afterwards, Bailey will host a Q&A, so fans can get an insider peek into all the behind-the-scenes gossip.

Project Runway Canada finalists Jason Meyers, left, Jessica Biffi and winner Sunny Fong.

ELLE EVENT Saturday, April 25, at the Carlu (Yonge & College). Tickets are $35 and include a boxed lunch, entrance to runway shows and seminars, and more. Visit elleshow.ca for all the details!

Editors' Pick

FASHION STARS

Want to experience a runway show featuring the best of Canadian fashion? Check out the ELLE event this Saturday, where top designers, including Tavan & Mitto (shown), Renata Morales, and Marie Saint Pierre, will show their spring 2009 collections!

MAUDE ARSAUNAULT/MODEL–GIGI

HOT BEAUTY

Summertime means sexy sundresses, evenings on the patio — and a whole new beauty look. The objective? Sun-kissed skin with perfectly painted lips and lids in summer shades of rose and coral. But before you toss your trusty foundation and stock up on bronzer, learn how to do it right. At the ELLE event this Saturday, Val Garland, the artistic advisor for Yves Saint Laurent Makeup, and Jacquie Hutchinson, the national product trainer for Revlon, will outline summer's prettiest makeup trends — and how to achieve them.

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Single women spoiling themselves
New studies show more and more single women are saying "I do" have the money to spoil myself with a new diamond ring. In fact, one study shows 65 per cent of jewelry bought by single women are rings, or "right hand rings" as they're being called. NEWS CANADA

Layering it on

What Not To Wear co-host offers his tips

City trench, $60 and The Comfort Pant, $30. Available at Reitmans.

No doubt about it, the calendar says it's spring. Yet, in many areas, you'd freeze in any of the sleeveless sheaths, short-sleeve jackets or rompers that are all over the stores and catalogues.

And light blue, yellow or pink colours — never mind white or light sand — don't look quite right against a predominantly grey and brown landscape.

Still, says stylist Clinton Kelly, co-host of TLC's What Not to Wear, instead of retreating to turtlenecks and tweed, lay on the layers to make your outfit weather-appropriate.

"I'm a big fan of lightweight leather. When you leave the house it could be 45 (degrees/7C) and at lunch, it can be 65 degrees (18C)," Kelly says. "A light leather jacket works for both."

Next month, Kelly makes the rounds to 15 cities across the United States in collaboration with Macy's, giving spring makeovers to 15 women at each stop.

Until the weather catches up with the mood of lighter clothes, Kelly suggests starting with a white tank top and putting on top a cotton shirt — perhaps in a floral print. A cotton or light merino wool cardigan in fuchsia or bright blue could go on next.

When layering, consider the weight of the fabrics of all the pieces, Kelly advises. A heavyweight item might be tweed, corduroy or heavy denim, a mid-weight silk, cotton or merino wool, and light could be chiffon or a tissue-weight T-shirt. It's simplest to pair fabrics that are only one weight away from each other — either heavy with mid, or mid with light.

"You can mix a tweed pant with a chiffon blouse, but that's graduate school-level fashion. It's easiest to layer multiple medium layers," Kelly says.

The key outerwear piece is a trenchcoat: It's lightweight, it looks seasonally appropriate and you can fit a lot underneath.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Above: Spring leather motorcycle jacket, $249 at Danier stores across Canada (danier.com); Printed Chiffon blouse, $35 at Smart Set.

Pretty prognosis for Doc Martens

TREND Look who's back and in a pretty, docile mood.

Dr. Martens, the boots that found favour with skinheads and other anarchists in the early '80s, have been making a comeback for some time now.

But this spring, these romper-stomper boots are in touch with their feminine side and getting all girlie.

Not just in pastel colours, they are positively bucolic in wallpaper-floral flocking.

Creator Dr. Klaus Maertens should be pleased. He did invent these boots with the air cushion after he hurt his foot in a skiing accident — a much gentler context before they became synonymous with anti-establishment style.

Doc Martens 1460, eight-eye boots, $159.99 at Neon, 391 Queen St. W. and neonclothing.ca.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Docs go girlie for spring — in lilac or pink flocking.

Cash in your jewelry

The soaring cost of gold is causing Canadian retailers and consumers to reappraise the value of necklaces, earrings and rings. Too busy to take your pieces to a jewelry store? Consider getting an estimate online. Many jewellers nowadays are trading online. NEWS CANADA

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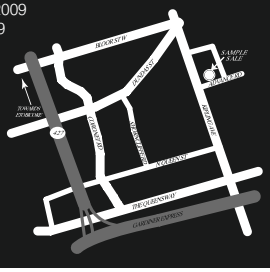

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Rap losing its bling?

Celebs donning less over-the-top jewelry

The hip-hop world is a less bling-bling place these days.

The music genre has been defined as much by diamond-encrusted watches and platinum chains as its gritty urban lyrics. But in the last couple of years, it has scaled down its flash, a trend insiders say has become more pronounced during the recent recession.

Make no mistake: The industry that made an urban household name out of New York's Jacob "Jacob the Jeweler" Arabov isn't entirely reversing course.

Case in point — Lil Wayne's A Milli, one of last year's biggest songs, which had the rapper bragging wildly about being a "young millionaire."

But "the day of conspicuous consumption is gone," says Tamara Connor, an Atlanta-based stylist who has created looks for chart-topping rappers, including Lil Wayne.

"We're still going to see some bling, but it's just not going to be as much," Connor says.

"Instead of four diamond necklaces, it might just be a diamond bracelet — and it's a piece the celebrity wears all the time. They're not changing their jewelry out everyday."

Photo shoots, for example, are being done with fewer of the specialized medallions considered a calling card for the likes of rapper Rick Ross, whose chain with a likeness of his head — complete with black diamond beard — has an estimated value of $30,000.

Instead, you might see a rapper in an off-the-shelf diamond cross or wearing lower-quality stones.

"You can save $3,000 a carat if you do non-ring quality diamonds for studs (earrings)," Connor notes.

Ben Baller, head of Los Angeles-based jeweller I.F. & Co., says the shift is most pronounced among up-and-coming rappers, for whom a steady income is seeming like less of a sure thing. Rap sales have declined along with the rest of the music industry.

Before, a new artist might spend $25,000 of a $30,000 advance on a chain, according to Baller, who counts Fat Joe as a client.

"Now they would rather try to spend $5,000 and $6,000," he says, adding, "they're willing to talk about options by using sapphires, using very, very low-quality gold.

"Some people (are) even wanting to mix diamonds with cubics (cubic zirconia) so it would not be completely ungenuine."

Cost cutting is major for the industry in which the carat-weight of one's ring could carry more cache than record sales. Ostentatious fashion has been in hip-hop's DNA since Slick Rick donned layers of opulent gold chains in the '80s.

The flash reflected the music style born of the streets of New York, its stars often hard-knock kids who christened their new success with thick rope chains and designer sweatsuits.

> **"The day of conspicuous consumption is gone ... Instead of four diamond necklaces, it might just be a diamond bracelet."**
> Tamara Connor, stylist

Over-the-top bling didn't represent all of rap fashion, as gritty gang looks, Afrocentric garb and even preppy styles have all been adopted and embraced as part of rap style.

But in the late 1990s and the early part of this decade, bling seemed to have reached its apex, complete with gold and diamond pimp cups and diamond grills for the teeth.

But in recent years, rap kings like Jay-Z and Diddy have displayed their swagger with looks that were more boardroom than bling, with button-down shirts and designer suits.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PETER KRAMER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Newer rappers like Young Jeezy, left, are keeping it simple when it comes to "bling-bling."

ashley zaba

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Food

All peppers start out as green and tart. As they ripen they turn first yellow, orange, or red depending on the cultivar grown.

BARB HOLLAND/FOR METRO CANADA

Sweet
The darker they become, the sweeter and more mellow the taste.

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

The gems under the glass

Canada lingers at the forefront of greenhouse vegetable production for decades

After a seemingly endless winter, we look forward to warm weather and the first vegetables of the season, asparagus, early greens and rhubarb. But between those first crops (usually May) and the lingering winter storage vegetables (carrots, cabbage and squash), greenhouse vegetables are a welcoming fresh taste — and locally grown.

As our short summers limit the quanity of field vegetables grown, Canada has been at the forefront of greenhouse production for decades.

Greenhouse vegetable production occurs in every province, with Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec as the largest producers.

According to the BC Greenhouse Growers' Association, more than five varieties of tomatoes, sweet bell peppers, hot peppers, mini peppers, long English cucumbers, mini cucumbers, and butter lettuce are grown under glass.

As always, read labels when grocery shopping to buy locally grown greenhouse vegetables.

Vine-ripened and hand-picked, greenhouse vegetables are premium quality and virtually pesticide-free, thanks to the use of natural predators to control pests. As always, read labels when grocery shopping to buy locally grown greenhouse vegetables.

Lightly Roasted Tri-Pepper Salad

From Foodland Ontario, this colourful salad made with Greenhouse Peppers is best served slightly warm or at room temperature. Serve with grilled chicken or pork. Serves 6.

INGREDIENTS:
- 2 each red, yellow and orange greenhouse peppers
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) balsamic or red wine vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper
- 1/3 cup (75 ml) crumbled goat cheese
- 1/4 cup (50 ml) torn fresh basil leaves

METHOD:
Cut each pepper into quarters, discarding seeds and stems. Place on a barbecue grill over medium heat. Grill until softened and just lightly charred, 15 to 20 minutes, turning as needed.

Whisk together oil, vinegar, garlic, salt and pepper to taste. Slice peppers into strips and toss with dressing in a large bowl. Place on serving plate, sprinkle with goat cheese and basil.

Barb Holland is a professional home economist and food writer who believes in shopping locally and in season.

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What to look for at the grocery store

"Fill your grocery cart with foods that are colourful because this means they are packed with nutrients — if it is from the farm eat it, if not, proceed with caution," says registered dietitian Helene Charlebois. METRO NEWS SERVICES

LiquidAssets

Peter Rockwell

metronews.ca/liquidassets

A great grape

What makes a particular grape variety the darling of liquor store shelves? It's a question that wakes up winemakers in a cold sweat in the middle of the night and gives liquid scribes like yours truly oodles of analytical inspiration.

Lately I've been working on why consumers are so crazy about Pinot Grigio (a.k.a. Pinot Gris). After much thought, and more than a few glasses, I think the reason is two fold. 1: Being easy to pronounce and fun to say has literally put it on the tip of everyone's tongue and, 2: It produces simple, quaffable vino that sucks in consumers like a magnet draws metal.

When it comes to true Italian versions **Voga's 2007 Pinot Grigio ($13.95 - $17.99)** is lean, green and rounds all the classic flavour bases while coming wrapped in one the coolest bottle I've seen in ages.

Of course every country has jumped on the bandwagon and **California's Barefoot Cellars Pinot Grigio ($9.95 - $11.99)** in a non-vintage charmer that's packed with juicy fruit.

The way it quenches my thirst on a warm day is what I dig most about the grape. Try it with fresh melon, a little Prosciutto and maybe some mozzarella or Brie and you'll see what I mean.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all provinces.

Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.

Lasagna: The sequel

Recently, Metro featured a super easy lasagna recipe from Barb Holland (visit metronews.ca/alacarte if you missed it) for cooks that are pressed for time. To jazz up your lasagna on the weekend, however, try something new.

This Martha Stewart recipe requires all store-bought ingredients and an hour's cooking time. You could substitute fried bacon for the more expensive prosciutto, or jazz up your store-bought sauce with sautéed mushrooms or other vegetables. Make sure you squeeze the spinach dry or the lasagna will be too runny. The lasagna pictured here was made with whole-wheat lasagna noodles. From Food Everyday magazine.

KEITH BEATY/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

This Martha Stewart recipe requires all store-bought ingredients and an hour's cooking time.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 300 g packages frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- 1 (475 g) container ricotta cheese
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Salt and fresh pepper to taste
- 2-1/2 cups (600 ml) store-bought pasta sauce
- 4 oz (113 g) thinly sliced prosciutto, chopped
- 3 sheets fresh lasagna noodles
- 1 cup (250 ml) shredded mozzarella cheese

METHOD:

In medium bowl, mix spinach, ricotta, garlic, salt and pepper. Set aside.

In another medium bowl, mix pasta sauce with prosciutto.

Trim lasagna noodles to fit 8-by-8-inch casserole dish.

Spread 1/4 cup sauce on bottom of dish. Place 1 lasagna sheet on top. Spread one-third ricotta mixture on top with fingers. Top with one-third pasta sauce.

Repeat twice.

Sprinkle mozzarella on top. Bake in 375F oven 35 minutes until top is bubbling and brown. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Makes 4 servings.

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Why we eat more than we need to

Registered dietitian Helene Charlebois says we often eat "empty calories" high in processed flour and sugar, and because they are not nutrient-dense, we wind up eating more calories to try and feel satisfied. Many companies are getting on the nutritious bandwagon, however. Visit nutrientrichfoods.org. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Local Savour

Black Angus Steak House
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416-233-7406
blackangussteakhouse.ca
Dinner and (a lot of) wine for two, $160

The heavy wooden door of this West Toronto restaurant is a gourmand's gateway to one of the city's best steaks. It's pricey but the food is of the gods and the service staff are clad in suits — old-world, tasteful, a place that swells with pride in what it does.

Wineries opt for e-tastings

As the recession continues to pinch budgets, some tech- (and cash-) savvy wineries are rethinking the tradition of jetting their winemakers around the country for in-person tastings with top critics.

Instead, wineries such as California's Kendall-Jackson are embracing low-cost, eco-friendly virtual tastings via the Internet.

The setup is pretty simple. Wine critics are shipped the bottles to be sampled, then emailed tasting notes. If they don't have a webcam, the winery sends that along, too. And the winery's tech people do a test run to make sure it all works.

Instead of sitting across a restaurant table, critic and winemaker view each other by videoconference.

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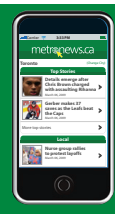

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Not for sale

No evidence suggests Rafiq Qureshi tried to sell his young daughter, Slumdog Millionaire actress Rubina Ali, police in Mumbai, India announced yesterday. The investigation started after an article in a British paper. **PEOPLE.COM**

Entertainment

Lily live

British pop star Lily Allen was in Toronto for a concert at the Sound Academy last night. Read Metro's review of the show at metronews.ca/music.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Rocker Ida Maria kicks butt

Ida **Maria**

Album: Fortress Round My Heart **Label:** Mercury/Universal
Rating: ●●●●½

IT WAS START-ING to get too easy to be a pop singer. All you had to do to make the grade, it seemed, was take on a retro sound and a name like Duffy or Adele. So it was about time that somebody like Ida Maria, 24-year-old rocker from Norway, came along to kick some deserved butt. Her forthright approach — so wonderfully demonstrated on her first single I Like You So Much Better When You're Naked — has already hit the charts in England. There's a celebratory charm to her off-key punk squawk that cuts through the crap on songs like Oh My God and Stella. She's the woman everyone wants to go out and get hammered with. Yet she also shows fragility on Keep Me Warm and desperation on Forgive Me. There's an attraction here that's unexplainable. Call it attitude, call it allure. Just give us more Ida Maria.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Depeche **Mode**

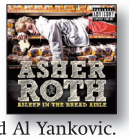
Album: Sounds of the Universe
Label: Capital/EMI
Rating: ●●●½

JUST BECAUSE THE '80s new-wave revival died out a couple years ago, doesn't mean the bands who actually came from that era have disappeared. Sounds of the Universe is new-wave pioneers Depeche Mode's 12th album and it's another synth-heavy blast of brooding electro sounds. Like the band's past work this is a highly emotive effort with plenty of fuzzy distortion and passionate croons from singer Dave Gahan. Some might be surprised that nearly 30 years on these guys can still create a pretty great listen, but they've done it and show no signs of slowing down.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Asher **Roth**

Album: Asleep in the Bread Aisle **Label:** SRC/Universal
Rating: ●●●½



FRAT BOY RAP? This CD would have been much easier to review if it was by Weird Al Yankovic. But the satire contained in I Love College — Roth's hilarious anthem to white male hedonism — hits too close to the truth. Just ask Michael Phelps. For some, undergraduate life indeed seems to be all about smoking dope, drinking near-lethal quantities of booze, vomiting, passing out and bragging about all the naked women they almost met. Comparisons to Eminem are ludicrous, but come nonetheless. Roth, an unabashed suburbanite from a good middle-class home near Philadelphia, handles them deftly on As I Em. Although it's hard not to laugh out loud with songs like Blunt Cruisin' and Bad Day, this is not a novelty disc. The music on tracks like She Don't Wanna Man, His Dream and Lion's Roar is just too good.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Norwegian rocker Ida Maria is forthright on her latest album Fortress Round My Heart, which is now available in stores.

Music**Reviews**

music@metronews.ca

Bat For **Lashes**

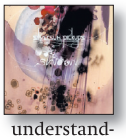
Album: Two Suns
Label: Echo/Parlophone/EMI
Rating: ●●●½

KATE BUSH USED to concoct ethereal art rock like this; same for Tori Amos, Sarah McLachlan and Björk to some extent. So what sets Natasha Khan's m.o. apart from these aforementioned greats? As this sophomore disc attests, the British songstress proffers a more ear-pleasing soprano, along with an imaginative dual lyrical character — a sometime spiritual mystic, a sometime sex-driven femme fatale — worth following. With a backdrop of reverberating keyboards, jungle-like percussion and mystical chamber-pop arrangements, Khan's eccentric lair sounds intriguing to visit. Yet some restraint in her vocal delivery, plus the odd jarring choir and male operatic vocalist, will lessen the overall experience.

Ian Nathanson/for Metro Canada

Silversun **Pickups**

Album: Swoon
Label: Dangerbird/Universal
Rating: ●●●



THE SILVER-SUN PICKUPS may have been trying a little too hard here. And that's understandable. The critical acclaim garnered by this L.A. foursome's debut CD, Carnavas, must have caught them by surprise. It must be tough waking up, after all, to discover that you're a creative genius. So Swoon lacks the spontaneity and raw edge of Carnavas. That's not to say that the use of a 10-piece orchestra was a bad idea. It actually works on tracks like The Royal We. At times, however, Brian Aubert's vocals are a little too smooth, a little too close to an emo whine. This is a transitional record, but there's still plenty of brilliance. Aubert offers up new worlds of fuzz guitar. We now need them fully explored.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

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Rice meets with Idol judge

Former secretary of state Condoleezza Rice thinks Randy Jackson is top dawg. When the classically trained pianist, 54, was in L.A. for her March 24th appearance on The Tonight Show With Jay Leno, she arranged to meet the American Idol judge, 52, for a private sit-down. PEOPLE.COM

Thornton not backing down

PEOPLE Billy Bob Thornton says he's shocked that his recent blow-up on CBC Radio made international headlines, adding that the incident gave "humpbacked geeks" something to do.

Thornton made the comments Tuesday on Jimmy Kimmel's late-night talk show.

"The fact that that was news was astounding to me," he told Kimmel. "But it gave humpbacked geeks all over the world something to do for a couple of days."

Thornton

The actor has kept a low profile since his bizarre CBC appearance earlier this month alongside his band, the Boxmasters.

During that interview, he was at turns belligerent and cryptic, apparently upset that host Jian Ghomeshi made mention of his acting career. Thornton says CBC had been asked to stay away from the topic.

The actor told Kimmel that he was lied to about the conditions of the CBC interview. Ghomeshi has said he was never explicitly asked to stay away from questions about Thornton's movie career.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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GETTY IMAGES

Heidi Montag and Spencer Pratt are preparing to get married this Saturday.

MTV prepares to film wedding of Hills stars

Montage, Pratt set to marry this weekend

Will they or won't they — again?

Heidi Montag and Spencer Pratt, the reality-TV couple whose on-again, off-again relationship has been chronicled by MTV's The Hills, weren't present at a panel celebrating the series Tuesday night because they're preparing for their Saturday wedding, the show's executive producers told the crowd at the William S. Paley Television Festival.

"It's a big gigantic event that takes the two of them to pull off," said Adam DiVello.

"And a white dress," added Liz Gateley.

DiVello said the show's crew was preparing to film the event. It won't be the first time that Montag, 22, and Pratt, 25, have attempted to tie the knot on camera.

> **"It's a big gigantic event that takes the two of them to pull off."**
> Adam DiVello

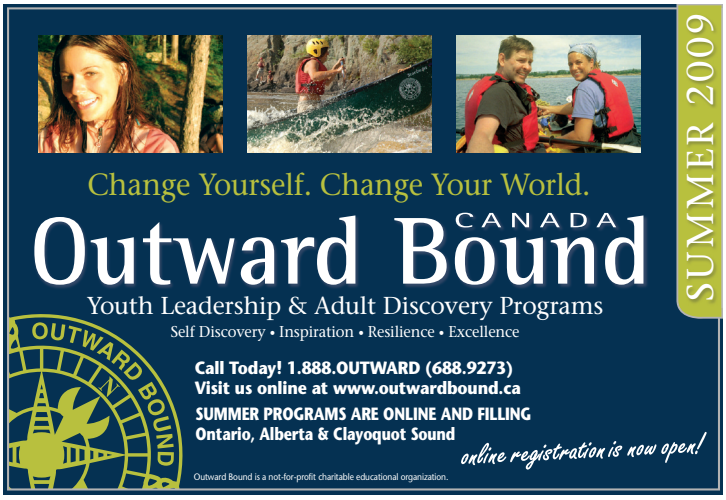
The pair appeared before a deputy commissioner at a Beverly Hills courthouse last December — but didn't say "I do" — after acknowledging their Nov. 19 marriage ceremony in Mexico was only symbolic.

Of those Hills cast members present at the PaleyFest panel — Lauren Conrad, Whitney Port, Audrina Patridge, Brody Jenner, Lauren "Lo" Bosworth and Stephanie Pratt — only Jenner, Bosworth and Pratt raised their hands when asked if they were invited to the ceremony. Pratt defended her brother's devotion to Montag.

"At the end of the day, Heidi is the most important person in his life," said Pratt.

Other tidbits uncovered during the panel: Crew members said they often make deals with the paparazzi so they can film the show in peace, and producers said they're in negotiations for another season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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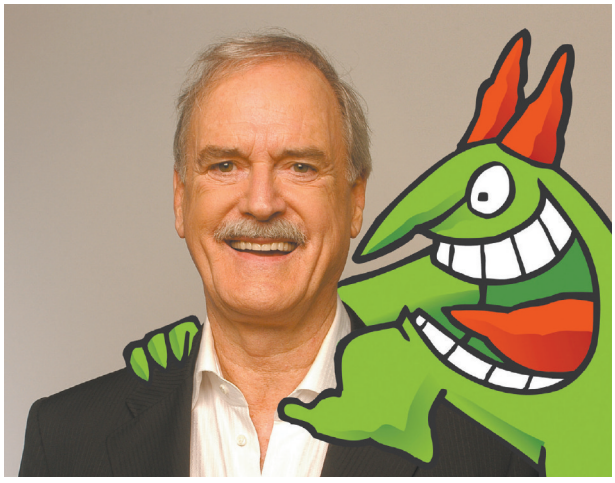

Cleese leads the charge at Just For Laughs.

Comedy fans in Toronto will soon have the unique opportunity to see one of the world's foremost comedians John Cleese! The eternal funny man behind Monty Python and A Fish Called Wanda, brings his legendary act to the Massey Hall stage on July 18, 2009 for two shows as he plays host to the WestJet BritCom gala, in association with Jacob's Creek® at this year's WestJet Toronto Just For Laughs Festival. The gala will showcase the best of British comedy with an exciting lineup of comedians from across the pond.

Cleese is the first of many high profile acts to be announced by the WestJet Toronto Just For Laughs Festival, which runs from July 15-19, 2009 throughout the city. Tickets for the WestJet BritCom Gala, in association with Jacob's Creek® are now available online at masseyhall.com or ticketmaster.ca or charge by phone at (416) 872-4255 or (416) 872-1111.

It's no illusion — Blaine's getting hitched
David Blaine is planning to marry his French girlfriend, model Alizee Guinochet. The illusionist reportedly confirmed the engagement to New York Post gossip column PageSix over the weekend. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Miss California not sorry

Miss California says she stands by her anti-gay-marriage comments, even if they may have cost her the Miss USA crown.

Carrie Prejean defended her views Tuesday on NBC's Today show, telling host Matt Lauer she spoke from the heart during Sunday's pageant when she said "marriage should be between a man and a woman."

The beauty queen's response to a question from openly gay pageant judge and celebrity blogger Perez Hilton has received more attention than the winner, Miss North Carolina Kristen Dalton. During the pageant, Hilton asked Prejean if every state should follow Vermont in legalizing same sex marriage.

"I think it's great that Americans are able to choose one or the other," Prejean responded. "But in my country and in my family I think that I believe that marriage should be between a man and a woman. No offence to anybody out there but that's how I was raised."

"For me, it's about being biblically correct."
Miss California Carrie Prejean

Hilton, who also appeared on the Today show Tuesday, said Prejean should have "left her politics and her religion out because Miss USA represents all Americans."

Prejean told Lauer she knew she wasn't going to win as soon as she answered. Still, she stands by her statements. "It's not about being politically correct," she said. "For me, it's about being biblically correct." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Graham Greene joins cast of film New Moon

CASTING Veteran actor Graham Greene has joined the cast of the Twilight sequel, New Moon.

The Canadian performer appears as Harry Clearwater, an old friend of Bella's father and a Quileute tribal leader.

New Moon, filming in Vancouver and Tuscany, Italy, focuses on a growing friendship between Bella (Kristen Stewart) and childhood friend Jacob Black (Taylor Lautner).

Robert Pattinson resumes his role as Bella's vampire boyfriend Edward Cullen, while Montreal's Rachelle Lafevre returns as the vampire Victoria.

The 56-year-old Greene appeared in Dances With Wolves, The Green Mile, Die Hard: With A Vengeance and the TV show, Northern Exposure. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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"I will not roll over and die"
New Episode
SURVIVOR: BRAZIL
8.00
TONIGHT
8.00 Survivor: Brazil New Episode
9.00 The Office New Episode
9.30 'da Kink in My Hair New Episode
10.00 Harper's Island New Episode
Global

Baby boy for Scott

R&B singer and actress Jill Scott and her fiancé, drummer Lil John Roberts, have welcomed their first child, a boy, her manager confirms to People. Jett Hamilton Roberts was born at 4:20 p.m. on April 20. He weighed in at 7 lbs., 8 oz. PEOPLE.COM

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Recession on TV

Wouldn't it be cool if all the new TV series cultivated from the mortgage crisis added up to an unforeseen message: The crisis is over!

Remember, TV shows have unwittingly served as economic forecasters before — though in the opposite direction.

Now comes talk of several new shows that will address American life from the other side, trading on the current recession.

This fall, the Fox schedule may include Two-Dollar Beer, a comedy set in a fading blue-collar neighbourhood in Detroit (and nicely timed to the auto industry's implosion). Millionaire's Club, another Fox comedy in the works, focuses on get-rich-quick schemes hatched by its financially reeling heroes.

A candidate for the ABC schedule is Canned, about a group of friends who all get laid off the same day. Little Piggy, another comedy in development for ABC, is about a husband who becomes financially ruined and returns to the home in which he grew up.

Yet another ABC comedy would star Kelsey Grammer as a Wall Street tycoon who loses his job and retreats to his backwater hometown.

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

ABC has plans for a comdy starring Kelsey Grammer, above, as an out-of-work Wall Street tycoon.

As with any new show, success for all these flavours of Recession TV will depend on execution, not a basic concept that may seem anything but new. (Both Little Piggy and Grammer's project sound suspiciously like an update of Ellen DeGeneres' short-lived sitcom in fall 2001: On The Ellen Show, she played a former high-tech magnate who, in the rubble of the dot-com crash, retreated to her backwater hometown.)

Make no mistake: There's plenty of humour to be mined from corporate downsizing and marketplace corruption — at least, in the right hands.

Reality TV is also cashing in. Presumably, mortgage-backed securities and pyramid schemes won't be among the ideas pitched on Shark Tank, an unscripted series in development for ABC where rival entrepreneurs try to win financial backing from a panel of tycoons. (Sounds a lot like CBC's Dragons' Den.)

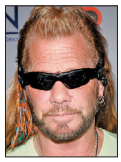
Shark Tank isn't the only reality show taking its cue from the recession. Fox got plenty of attention (and a measure of disgust) with its announcement of Someone's Gotta Go, a dog-eat-dog competition that invites employees of a troubled small business to choose who should be sacrificed to cut costs.

As a show that's easily relatable to viewers who are currently laid off, are panicking they soon will be or are simply mean-spirited, Someone's Gotta Go seems perfect for its time. But what if, instead, its time is already past — or is just about to be?

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Accused shoots at TV bounty hunter

REALITY TV Police in Colorado say shots were fired at TV bounty hunter Duane "Dog" Chapman and a bail bondsman when they tried to apprehend a man whose bail was revoked on an attempted murder charge.



Duane Chapman

Colorado Springs police Sgt. Roger Vargason says the two were attempting to take Hoang Nguyen, 35, into custody Tuesday night when Nguyen shot at them at least once with a handgun and fled on a motorcycle. No injuries were reported.

Vargason says initial reports showed Chapman and the bondsman were armed only with paintball guns.

Police said Chapman — star of A&E's Dog: The Bounty Hunter — apprehended Nguyen early yesterday.

Big names up for children's book award

NOMINATED Books by Robert Munsch, Charles Pachter and Kenneth Oppel have made the short list for the 2009 Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Awards.

The two prizes, worth $6,000 apiece, recognize excellence in children's literature. The winning titles will be selected by young readers at Market Lane Junior and Senior Public School in Toronto.

The Ruth Schwartz Children's Book Awards were originally set up by Sylvia Schwartz in honour of her sister, a Toronto bookseller. Five years ago they were renamed to celebrate both sisters.

The winner will be announced May 20.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kenya's Style
Kenya Hunt
Read the blog at metronews.ca/kenyasstyle

For complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and tickets, visit: metronews.ca/movies

TO 4/23/09

	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	265	353	2 TVO	Megastructures		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		London Hospital		Masterworks (N)		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3 GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Survivor: Tocantins (N)		The Office (N)	Kink in Hair	(10:01) Harper's Island (N)		News
	215	343	4 OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere Il	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	210	302	6 CBC	NHL Hockey: Eastern Conference Quarterfinal Game 5 -- Flyers at Penguins						National	NHL Hockey: Conf. Quarterfinal	
	214	344	7 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		In Motherhood	Parks-Recreat	30 Rock	30 Rock	Hell's Kitchen (N)		News (N)
	212	313	8 CTV	etalk	Hollywood	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		Grey's Anatomy (N)		Southland (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
	218	345	11 E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	Name Is Earl	10 Items-Less	My Fabulous Gay Wedding		Party Monsters: Cabo		News (N)
	137	763	13 TFO	Panorama		Michel Tremblay		*Stromboli* ★★ (1950, Drame) Ingrid Bergman, Mario Vitale.				Volt
	-	-	14 -	Raymond	Raymond	News (N)		News (N)		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
	213	326	15 SUN	Scrubs	George Lopez	Smallville "Stiletto" (N)		Supernatural (HDTV) (N)		To Serve and Protect		Becker
	-	387	16 CBS	Inside Edition	Hollywood	Survivor: Tocantins (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		(10:01) Harper's Island (N)		News (N)
	-	385	17 NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Name Is Earl	Parks-Recreat	The Office (N)	30 Rock	Southland (HDTV) (N)		News (N)
	-	386	18 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	In Motherhood	Samantha Who	Grey's Anatomy (N)		(10:02) Private Practice (N)		News (N)
	219	346	20 ACH-B	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Old Christine	Samantha Who	America's Next Top Model		(10:02) Private Practice (N)		News (N)
	-	-	28 FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	Bones (HDTV PA) (N)		Hell's Kitchen (N)		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61 PBS	News-Lehrer	Goodnight Swt.	Doc Martin		Story of God		MI-5 "I Spy Apocalypse"		Business Rpt.
	297	652	330 WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Smallville "Stiletto" (N)		Supernatural (HDTV) (N)		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
	296	654	331 SBK	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dr. Phil (HDTV) (N)		WBZ News (N)	Phantom	Frasier	Frasier	Punk'd
	298	653	332 TLA	Jamie Foxx	Wayans Bros.	My Wife-Kids	According-Jim	Friends	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Smallville
news	502	390	26 NW	CBC News	Newman	Planet Earth "Caves"		CBC News: The National		CBC News: The National		National
	500	500	33 CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79 CNB	Kudlow Report		CNBC Reports (HDTV)		Dirty Money: Prostitution		On the Money		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22 net	MLB Baseball Texas Rangers at Toronto Blue Jays. From Rogers Centre in Toronto.						Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	400	400	30 TSN	NHL Hockey: West Quarterfinal -- Red Wings at Blue Jackets					NHL Hockey	SportsCentre	NBA Basketball: First Round	
	411	457	58 OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Departures "Morocco"		Mantracker		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Departures
	417	406	81 SC	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time	Pinks -- All Out (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV) (N)		Pimp My Ride
family	551	542	25 YTV	True Jackson	H2O, Just Add	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	In Real Life "E.R."		Falcon Beach		Mystery Hnt.
	554	544	45 TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	*Hellboy: Sword of Storms* (2006, Fantasy)			*Hellboy: Sword*
	556	540	51 FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
cable variety	602	567	27 W	Will & Grace	Friends	Divine Design	House	Confidential	Save Us-House	Divine Design	Love It-List It	House
	570	580	29 MM	The O.C.		Hooking Up	Technical Diff.	Daddy's Girls	Degrassi: TNG	MuchTopTens		Video on Trial
	615	520	31 A&E	The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV) (N)		The Beast (N)		The Beast
	700	800	35 TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Io e Mamma (Italian).				Raymond	Raymond	George Lopez
	571	581	36 MMM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		Metal Mania		Entourage	Gene Simmons	The Daily Fix
	575	583	38 CMT	Totally	Totally	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Gone Country
	616	521	39 SHO	The Outer Limits		Love-Death	Love-Death	Trailer Park	Trailer Park	*The Departed* (2006, Crime Drama)		
	620	523	40 BVO	Camera	Snapshot	Bathroom Divas-Opera Star		*McLuhan's Wake* (2002, Documentary)				Law & Order
	601	562	41 SLC	Skin Deep	Til Debt-Part	X-Weighted "Jill"		X-Weighted		X-Weighted		ET Canada
	522	506	43 HIS	NCIS "Lost & Found"		Ancient Discoveries		Go Deep In Istanbul.		NCIS "Lost & Found"		Sea Hunters
	625	548	44 COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	VIP	Extreme Wind	Daily Show
	600	564	46 H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes in New Orleans		Disaster DIY	Big Amazing	House Hunters	House Hunters	HolmesOrleans
	294	529	47 TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	*The Crow: City of Angels* (1996, Fantasy)		
	576	582	49 BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		*Getting Played* (2005, Romance-Comedy) Carmen Electra.				College Hill	Harlem Heights	*Getting Played*
	627	528	50 SPC	Stormworld	Grand Star	Star Trek: Voyager		Ghost Hunters		Chuck (HDTV) (N)		Stargate SG-1
	581	566	52 MTV	Mom & Dad	After	MTV News	Cribs	The Hills	The Hills	Taking the Stage (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54 TROP	Vanity Insanity	Inside Hollywood		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	603	561	56 FOOD	Chef at Home	Exotic	Restaurant Makeover		Chef Jeff Project (N)		Ace of Cakes	Ace of Cakes	Chef Abroad
	261	394	60 V	Murder, She Wrote		Wait for God	'Allo, 'Allo!	*Project X* ★★ (1987, Drama) Matthew Broderick.				Poltergeist
	621	527	63 STR	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		TMZ (N)	etalk	American Idol Extra (N)		The Tonight Show-Jay Leno		TMZ
	553	546	65 TRE	Backyardigans	Nght Grdn	Max & Ruby	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast	Comfy Couch	Zigby	Max & Ruby
	115	711	101 TVA	Dépenses xtr	Histoires-filles	Dr. House "Maternité" (SC)		Destination Nor'Ouest (SC)		TVA 22 heures	(10:45) Denis Lévesque	
	126	730	102 RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	526	507	249 VIVA	Judging Amy		Most Haunted		Most Haunted "Hever Castle"		Passion	Homicide File	Psychic Inv.
	300	601	301 M1	(7:15) *Baby Mama* ★★ (2008, Comedy) Tina Fey.				*Boy A* ★★★ (2007, Drama), Katie Lyons			(10:45) *Slipstream*	
	305	612	306 PIX	*Two Rode Together* ★★★ (1961, Western)				*The Devil's Own* ★★★ (1997, Suspense) Harrison Ford.				*Dirty* ★★

critics' corner

Masterworks
A sad but compelling portrait of an artist as a middle-aged man, "The Art of Failure: Chuck Connelly Not for Sale" follows painter Chuck Connelly through six years of his life. An unashamed alcoholic, Connelly was one of the up-and-coming stars of the art world in the 1980s, but his hard drinking and difficult personality alienated patrons, collectors and loved ones. Let's just say his epitaph is not likely to read, "Played well with others." 10 PM on TVO

Southland
Art imitates life to some extent, as Tom Sizemore ("Saving Private Ryan") guest stars as a hard-partying actor who has star-struck Dewey (guest star C. Thomas Howell) wanting to play along instead of booking him, making Chickie (Arija Bareikis) second-guess her decision to be Dewey's partner. Ben (Ben McKenzie) opens up about why he wanted to be a cop in the new episode "See a Woman." 10 PM on CTV

LC back at it
One month after 23-year-old Lauren Conrad announced that she was taking a hiatus from her upscale clothing line, the Hills star is launching a brand new apparel line for Kohl's department stores, people.com reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Gay marriage quip sparks defence

OPINION In light of Miss California slamming gay marriage, Britney Spears and Miley Cyrus have stepped forth to declare that they support gay rights.

"Love is love!" Spears, 27, said on her Twitter page on Tuesday. "People should be able to do whatever makes them happy!"

Cyrus, 16, also Twittered to openly gay blogger Perez Hilton (who asked Miss California Carrie Prejean what she thought of same-sex marriage during Sunday's Miss USA competition) after Hilton informed Cyrus of the high suicide rates among gay and lesbian youth.

"Jesus loves you AND your partner and wants you to know how much He cares!" Cyrus said. "Like I said, everyone deserves to be happy."

Later, she added, "I am a Christian and I love you — gay or not — BECAUSE you are no different than anyone else! We are all God's children."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

LiLo's friends worried

PEOPLE More friends are voicing their concern about Lindsay Lohan in the wake of her split from Samantha Ronson, according to Page Six.

A source says the actress is "a complete and utter wreck" and has been partying hard and spending time with "a different man every night."

According to the newspaper, some of those men include 90210 star Kellan Lutz and British photographer Chris Jepson. The friends fear Lohan may be headed for a major meltdown.

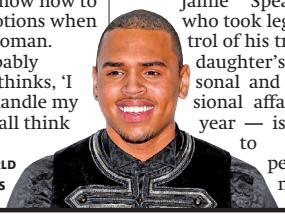
METRO WORLD NEWS

Mike Tyson's tips for Chris Brown

ADVICE Former boxing champ Mike Tyson has some thoughts on Chris Brown, who's accused of assaulting Rihanna.

"My personal opinion about that is, he's just a baby," Tyson tells MTV News. "He's just a little baby that don't know how to handle his emotions when it comes to a woman.

"And he probably hears this and thinks, 'I know how to handle my emotions.' We all think we do."



METRO WORLD NEWS

Britney to have day in court?

LEGAL Britney Spears is "crying out for help," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Circus singer is desperately trying to escape from her controlling father, her former attorney's lawyer told a Los Angeles court on Tuesday.

Jamie Spears — who took legal control of his troubled daughter's personal and professional affairs last year — is trying to obtain permanent restraining orders against the singer's former manager Sam Lutfi, attorney Jon Eardley and lover Adnan Ghalib.

The 27-year-old singer's legal team refutes the claims, calling the men predators who have patently threatened and continually harassed her.

Eardley's lawyer Roger Diamond wants Britney to testify in court because he believes her father is holding her prisoner.

The temporary restraining orders against all three men were extended until April 28, when the judge will hear rebuttal arguments before making a final decision.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Never been drunk: Paula

PEOPLE Paula Abdul says she doesn't take prescription drugs — and she's never even been drunk. The American Idol judge hopes to set the record straight in a Nightline interview, which aired on ABC last night.

Asked by Cynthia McFadden about her loopy on-air behaviour and rumours of her taking pills in the past, Abdul says, "Never. I've never been drunk in my life. I don't like it. It's not my thing ... Will not take those drugs. And you can check my medical records — there is nothing like that."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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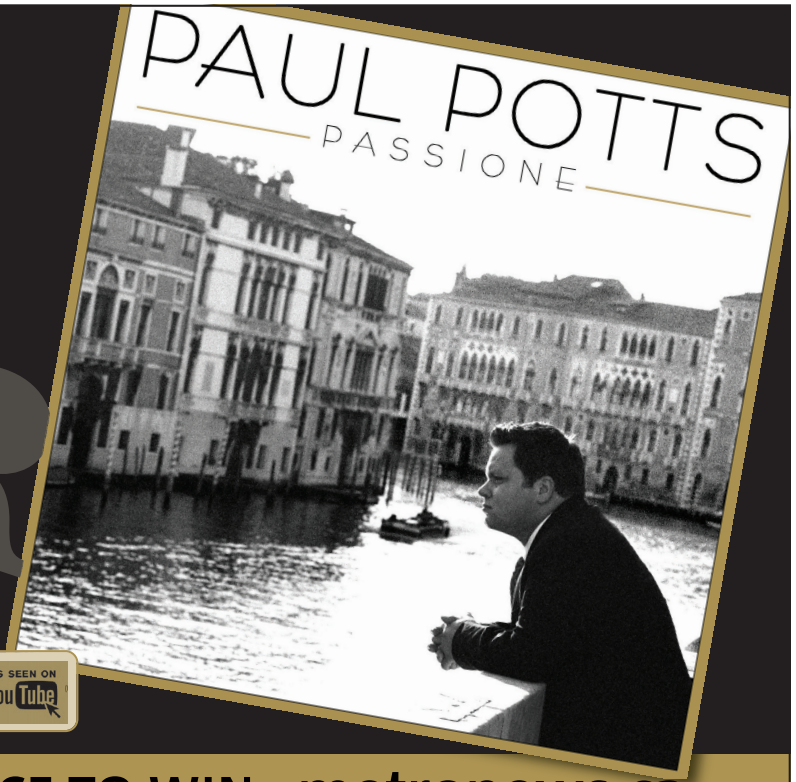

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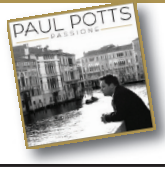

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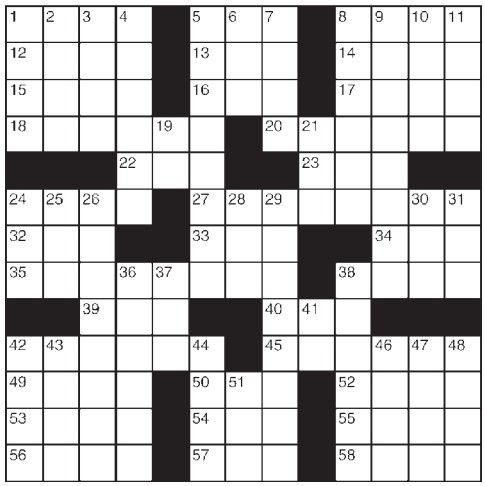

Crossword across

1 Mid-May honorees
5 Ref
8 Unadulterated
12 Grand story
13 D.C. type
14 Mimicked
15 Crosby, Stills and —
16 Ferrigno or Costello
17 Secondhand
18 Occurring last month
20 With tenderness
22 Vast expanse
23 Nipper's co.
24 Start of something big?
27 Lisa, to Marge
32 Tear
33 Kreskin's claim
34 Ostrich's kin
35 Puzzle
38 Formerly, formerly
39 Whatever amount
40 Hostel
42 "Family Feud" prelim
45 Torrential rainstorm
49 Destroy
50 Sapporo sash
52 Suitor
53 Sean Penn title role
54 Relatives
55 Reply to "Shall we?"
56 Eyelid woe
57 See 24-Across
58 Otherwise

Crossword down

1 Carte
2 October stone
3 Atomizer output
4 Division
5 Transferred files
6 Cattle call?
7 Advertise
8 Potbelly
9 Buffalo resident, e.g.
10 Fishing rod accessory
11 Whirlpool
19 Yours truly
21 Work unit
24 Sphere
25 Compete
26 In the ascendant
28 Enzyme suffix
29 Riot
30 Type squares
31 Same old same-old
36 Bring about
37 Caustic solution
38 Allow to happen
41 007's doctor foe
42 Totals
43 Condo, e.g.
44 Oxen's joiner
46 Boat's bottom
47 Packs away
48 Stratagem
51 Ginormous

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		7	8	9		6		5
4		5	3					9
	9							
8		9			6			
		2				9		
			7			2		1
							1	
3					4	8		6
2		6		1	7	3		

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

8	7	3	4	1	9	5	6	2
4	9	6	2	8	5	1	3	7
1	2	5	3	7	6	8	4	9
7	4	9	5	6	2	3	8	1
5	8	2	1	3	7	4	9	6
3	6	1	8	9	4	7	2	5
9	1	4	7	2	3	6	5	8
6	3	7	9	5	8	2	1	4
2	5	8	6	4	1	9	7	3

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min.....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Fragrant Lamb with Spinach

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp (25 ml) canola oil
2 onions, minced
4 garlic cloves, crushed
2-in. (5-cm) piece fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
1 red chili pepper, seeded, deveined, and sliced
2 tsp (10 ml) paprika
2 tsp (10 ml) ground cumin
2 tsp (10 ml) ground coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) ground white pepper
1/2 tsp (2 ml) cinnamon
Seeds from 8 green cardamom pods, crushed
2 bay leaves
1/2 tsp (2 ml) salt
1/2 cup (125 ml) plain yogurt
1/4 cup (50 ml) sour cream
1 lb (500 g) lean boneless lamb, cubed
2 large tomatoes, chopped
1 bag (10 oz/225 g) fresh baby spinach
4 tbsp (60 ml) chopped fresh cilantro
Fresh cilantro sprigs

METHOD:

1. Heat oil in large pot over medium heat. Add onions, garlic and ginger; sauté, stirring frequently, until onions are golden, 10 minutes.
2. Stir in chili pepper, paprika, cumin, coriander, white pepper, cinnamon, cardamom seeds, bay leaves and salt. Stir briefly over medium heat. Stir yogourt and sour cream together, then stir into pot with 2/3 cup (150 ml) water. Add lamb, mix well and cover pan. Simmer until lamb is tender, about 1 1/4 hours.
3. Add tomatoes, spinach and cilantro. Cook, stirring, until tomatoes are soft and spinach wilts, 2 minutes. Taste for seasoning and remove bay leaf. Serve garnished with fresh cilantro.

SERVES 4

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For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Deal with health issues one at a time. Jealousy makes you laugh. Count your blessings in an unbelievable situation.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
A lazy person reveals deep-seated greed. Play it safe by speaking out. Limit your involvement with a sneaky old friend.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Be bold to defeat bashfulness. Trust affection to win over a friend. Say goodbye to a painful past.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Pardon an annoying coward who left a mess. An insulting accusation creates anxiety. An astounding dream leads you to good fortune.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
A problem will be solved if you play it cool. Defenses cause your fight-or-flight mechanism to engage. Don't let a bad phone call ruin communication.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Try to hide some slobby personal habits. Unexpected demands widen your perspective. Change your tactics when mercy is shown.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
A victory will be a vindication. A perplexing situation arises at the last minute. Maintain your silence about trashy treasures.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
Reorganizing causes wonderful changes. Help a friend to take it easy. You can nurture hope for a sweetheart.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
A sentimental person exposes a new passion to you. Don't judge someone who lives in despair. Shake off your qualms by learning the facts.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
Gambling causes a breach in a weak relationship. A shameless person is enthusiastic. There's a pointless argument over a ridiculous rule..

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
You won't want to heed any cries for help. An oddball gets ignored in public. A judgmental woman ridicules signs of growing older.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A youngster wants you to take charge. The odds can be beaten. An entertaining adventurer attracts attention.

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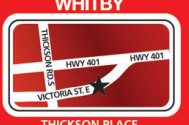

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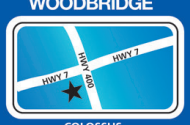

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